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THE

SECRET CORRESPONDENCE

OF

ADAME DE MAINTENON,

WITH THE

PRINCESS DES URSINS;

FROM THE

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS

IN THE POSSESSION OF

THE DUKE DE CHOISEUL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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LETTERS

OF THE

PRINCESS DES URSINS.

LETTER LXXVII.

TO MADAME DE MAINTENON.

Madrid, April 17th, 1707.

If I wish to receive letters written with your own hand, Madam, it is because they afford me a greater certainty of your good health: but for this, I assure you that I like to see the handwriting of Mademoiselle d'Aumale as well as yours, and I do not think you the less polite for it. If it were possible for you to be a hundred times more sad than you are, I should continue ardently to desire the continuance of your correspondence, for the marks of your friendship are alone capable of sustaining me in my numerous troubles.

I have read to the ambassador what you say respecting him, and it has been a great consolation to him: he is a worthy and honourable man, very zealous in his duty, and an excellent minister.

It is true that our affairs in Spain continue better than we could have reasonably expected. We are now upon the eve of a decisive action, and which, as far as we are able to judge from appearances, will be in our favour. The enemy, whom public report represents as very inferior in number to the army of Marshal de Berwick, approaches him, it is said, notwithstanding their weakness, with the intention of fighting, being forced to it by the want of provisions, and because they know that considerable succours are coming from France, and which would completely overwhelm them. The two armies are only four leagues from each other, and all the officers of our army, great and small, Spaniards and Frenchmen, say and write to everybody here, that if our general does not give battle they will be in despair, having no doubt of being victorious. We must think that Marshal de Berwick will do his duty, and meanwhile send up vows and prayers that God may inspire him with a wise resolution. How fortunate it would be for France and Spain to begin the campaign by such an action, which would enable us afterwards to succour the districts which require it most. I should fear flat-

tering you too much by hopes which appear so well founded, and which nevertheless cannot but be uncertain. I do not apprehend that what I tell you will make too great an impression, from knowing that your natural inclination leads you more to fear ill success than to expect good. I cannot help telling you that I am surprised to learn that Marshal de Tessé with the troops that he has, is afraid of the Duke of Savoy. I do not like fear in a general; and unfortunately you have no great choice of them. I am struck with an idea on this subject which I cannot refrain from communicating, although you may think it ridiculous: why did you not replace him by the Prince de Vaudemont, if it is true, as is asserted, that he returns to France? His health, although delicate, would not prevent him from acting, since his head is sound and good; and there is more need of prudence and firmness than anything else in that quarter. He is perfectly well acquainted with the country, as well as with the Prince with whom he would have to act, and would be able to carry on his intrigues in the Milanese and the rest of Italy. He would want a good lieutenant-general under him to execute his orders if he had not strength to execute them himself, and it is not the first time that great men have commanded armies in this manner. The Prince would dread him, I think, more than the present commander.

The Prince de Vaudemont would not, doubtless, desire such a command; but I think that his affection for the two Kings, would induce him voluntarily to sacrifice any repugnance he mighi have in accepting it. I entreat you to let me know if my idea is a silly one, for I should not be at all offended at it.

I write to Madame de Beauvilliers and M. de Langlée, entreating and urging them again to reduce the expense as much as possible of what they are getting done for us, for my avarice goes so far to spare the King of Spain's money, that if I were not fearful of offending the persons who are concerned in these purchases, I should desire them to put nothing more than a plain yellow silk borde to the whole of the curtains and hangings of the child's room, and to send us very low priced lac for the linen. What would they say of such sordid wretch, and should I not be lowered i their estimation? Do not fail, Madam, to soun them a little upon this point.

I am very anxious about the Duchess of Bur gundy's health, and do not like the slow feve continuing about her; but if the result should b pregnancy, we ought to be comforted, althougl to say the truth, I would not wish, for the sake o our Princess, that she should have so short respite. The Queen and myself will be ver impatient for the arrival of the next post fo news respecting her, and I shall not be less so t

hear that you are better. It is nothing but chagrin that kills you; and this makes me still more desirous of fortune becoming favourable to us, since the preservation of your life becomes daily of more consequence. At length we expect the Duke of Orleans to-morrow; he comes, I am assured, upon a very long-eared mule. His Royal Highness prefers this conveyance to the risk of being thrown out of his chaise a second time, and rolling over three or four times, as happened to him lately. The roads are very bad, and the Princes, you know, never fear breaking their necks, travelling as they always do at a furious rate; however, they would not do ill to undeceive themselves, and to believe that accidents may happen to them as well as to other men: our young King is insufferable in this respect

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LETTER LXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 20th, 1707.

I SHALL only send you a line by the courier which the Duke of Orleans dispatches to the court this evening, because I have not leisure for

more. This morning was spent at Church and in conversing with his Royal Highness, the ambassador being present; we are just going to vespers, which will last till supper. Their Majesties cannot be better satisfied than they are with the Prince, and I think he is not less so with them; their conversation was very free, and as it ought to be when the good of the service is only in view. The Duke of Orleans is extremely condescending, and has not failed to tell me of the King's good wishes towards me, of which I assure you, Madam, I become daily more sensible; and as words are wanting to express my respectful gratitude, excuse my having recourse to you, whose friendship never fails me in a case of necessity. I have received one of your letters by M. de Rupelmonde, and another under cover from M. de Chamillard, which I postpone answering to another opportunity, when I can write to you more to the purpose. Meanwhile I wish, however, to assure you that you will not be dissatisfied with what I shall send you, as I am more anxious than ever to merit your esteem and friendship, of which I make more account than of all the things of this world.

The Duke of Orleans is in a fair way of getting himself much beloved in this country for his urbanity and politeness; and as for esteem, it is impossible to withhold it from him. He sets out to-morrow to join Marshal de Berwick. Letters

just received, state that all the French and Spanish troops expect him with great impatience. It seems to me that it is now doubtful whether there will be a battle so soon, although the troops ardently long for one. I could wish that our great Princess were in perfect health, and that your own were not so indifferent.

LETTER LXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 25th, 1707.

I WILL answer to-day, a little more at length than I did by the last courier, your two letters of March 27th and April 10th. Marshal de Noailles has done very well not to die, as it would have too deeply afflicted all his family and friends, and I should have been one of the latter who would certainly have most regretted him, for I honour him and very sensibly feel whatever affects his lady, to whom I am under many obligations; and I am not less interested in what concerns his son. A better opinion of him cannot be entertained than I have, for I am convinced of his courage, intelligence, uprightness, and the nobleness of his senti-

ments; but I think, moreover, that there is in him wherewithal to make a great man, who will be capable of serving the King in every employ for which a subject of his talents may be destined; therefore I hope that his virtue and merit will raise him to be a general without your or his own seeking. It is certain that I should answer boldly that you would prefer his usefully serving the King of Spain, as captain of infantry, to his being at the head of an army without doing his duty. I have read to their Majesties the description which you give of him, and they said it appeared very unaffected; you have, however, forgot one trait of his character, on which account I cannot help reproaching you, and that is, the suavity of his conversation, which never becomes tedious: he also possesses the tact of communicating his vivacity to others without any diminution of his own, as well as making people imagine they are endowed with talents by merely observing his: thus it is that you listen to him continually without feeling any inclination to take up the conversation yourself. He has written to me since his arrival at Perpignan, giving an account of the situation of the Catalans, and as it will not be his fault if he doos not profit by it, Madam, it would be desirable that he were a little stronger in Rousillon than he is, so as to make a diversion which might embarrass the Archduke. The partisan who had engaged to take Monseigneur, or

some one of our Princes, must have had great temerity, and it is doing him a service to confine him in a place of safety, for perhaps if he had any other project in his brain, he would not have got off so easily. I figure to myself on this occasion the French, even those who cry out most against everything which is done, or which is not done, often without reason and sometimes with it, for their good sense cannot belie itself. I am not surprised at your being attacked by the fever, on hearing of such an adventure: your sensibility to everything which concerns the royal family could not fail to excite alarm as to what might have happened if this audacious attempt had succeeded. As for the Duchess of Burgundy, I cannot persuade myself but she must have had a fit of shuddering for twenty-four hours, caused by the fright; she, who lavishes her life so much upon pleasure, which you assure me she does not enjoy, and which only turns her brain. I am not afraid of your telling her from me, that I cannot patiently suffer her to ruin her health by staying up and running about all night, when she might enjoy the same amusements all day, and to a reasonable hour in the evening; but I should be delighted, if she liked to be made a prisoner, in order to learn afterwards all that had been done and said. These are things in their proper places, for all this would certainly be very curious to know and difficult to imagine. This Princess would be a good

prize nevertheless; she might prove the apple of discord between the allied Princes, who would all doubtless claim the honour of making her their prisoner, and for that reason I do not know whether it would not have been a good thing for us if she had fallen into their hands, since it might have brought about a peace by disuniting this cruel league.

As I doubt not but the Duchess de Beauvilliers shows you what I write to her, I shall not repeat it to you: I only preach up simplicity in my letters, even to parsimony. However careful she may have been in everything which she has condescended to undertake, I see with much regret that it will not fail to cost the King of Spain a great deal of money. The Duchess kindly enters into my nigardly views, but I fear M. de Langlée will not be so indulgent, and that it will end by his despising a *camerara mayor* who only preaches up penury. I hope, Madam, you will employ all your skill to prevent me from losing his esteem. The ambassador is always delighted when I show him the many obliging things you say on his account; it is very necessary, if possible, that he and myself redouble our zeal and assiduity for the service, in conjunctures which become every day more important and difficult, and thank God our union increases hourly. I know not why the last of my letters appeared to you perfumed, unless the courier who was charged

with it had an old pocket of Spanish leather which he inherited from his ancestors, for I have heard say, *despues el rey hasta los rapateros**, there was not a Spaniard who did not carry odours in order to counteract the effluvia which assailed him in the streets of Madrid. Since a certain period tobacco has taken their place, and this last stench has absolutely banished all perfumes that are good for anything. I should be very sorry if the poor Duchess de Lude had died, and I think also from the Duchess of Burgundy's goodness of heart, that she would have regretted her; and I hope the gout which torments this lady of honour, will at least dissipate the bad humours that have thrown her into the danger from which she has recovered.

As to what concerns the Duchess de Gramont, her illness appears to me more dangerous from your manner of representing it; her courage and spirit having degenerated into weakness and tears, it would seem there is no hope for her. One would not have thought formerly that her husband had been able to contribute so much to her consolation, nor that she would have believed it possible to be abandoned when she had so many friends who seemed to be attached to her: this is a fine subject for reflection, and I think her much to be pitied.

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* From the king to the beggar.

However small the number of troops the King of Spain might be able to send to Naples, it is thought they would be sufficient to keep this kingdom and that of Sicily in their duty, from the good disposition of the people in behalf of their lawful Sovereign, and the fear they are under of being subjugated by an usurper. The viceroys write us constantly to this effect, and add that they were delighted to hear of the Queen's pregnancy.

The Duke of Orleans has told their Majesties, that Marshal de Tessé, who would be replaced by M. de Medavid, has done so well in Italy that one may suppose he will do the same in this new employ. As for M. de Tessé, it appears to me that the fact of his not thinking himself in safety is a sufficient cause for his recall, for I have heard it said that a man is half beaten when he is apprehensive of being beat at all. For the same reason, the boldness of M. de Vendome should inspire us with the hope that he will avenge the mischief which has been done us by my Lord Marlborough, who will perhaps see that fortune is not always constant, and that the Prince, who is opposed to him this campaign, will strip him of some of his laurels.

It is unpleasant, as you observe, Madam, for the King to displease the general officers; but when retrenchments are necessary, his Majesty must undergo the pain which it gives him, through

his extreme goodness of heart, to see others suffer from such causes.

There cannot be stranger reasons than you assign for wishing to terminate so cruel a war, which is accompanied with every species of misery, without a single battle gained in this country in our favour; but I see no appearance of it, for France and Spain are destroying themselves; if we can succeed, all will change into good for us, and the enemy will be no longer elated with pride at their good fortune. It is very certain that we have many advantages over them up to the present time; but we must not wait, if possible, till they are reinforced. Do not afflict yourself, then, before it is time; forget that you are no longer young, and do not consider death as your only consolation, which I cannot hear mentioned without grief, although I flatter myself that it is still at a great distance. What a pleasure it would be for their Majesties and for us all, if news could be sent to the King of his obtaining a victory! I protest to you, Madam, that the satisfaction of his Majesty would be greater than all the advantages which would result from it. I admire him incessantly, and the King and Queen make me reperuse several times what you have written to me of his fortitude, equanimity, and mildness in the midst of so many reverses, which will naturally sour the best temper. God grant that he may continue in the same state of mind and in good health.

I trespass upon your patience, Madam, but you must attribute it to your too great indulgence towards me, which makes you even excuse my importunities. I conclude by assuring you of my respectful attachment, which will last during my whole life.

LETTER LXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 28th, 1707.

Let us rejoice, Madam, and return thanks to God, by whose Almighty arm we have gained a complete victory over our enemies. What cause of joy for the King, for all the royal family, and what a consolation for you! Their Majesties, I can assure you, are still more alive to this great event, in as much as it will give satisfaction to the King their grandfather, than from their own particular interest, and the pleasure they have of seeing their throne firmly established. I shall not attempt to describe my feelings, as you may judge of them from your own. It was I who had the happiness of announcing this news to the King and Queen, which I did in the most delicate manner, in order that the feelings of her Majesty

might not be overpowered, and to preserve our Prince of Asturias, who, we may hope, will be born at an auspicious period. Present my humble respects to the King, Monseigneur, and the Duchess of Burgundy, and also to the other Princes. I could wish to have written to them, but I commission you, Madam, if you please, for you will pardon such liberties on a day when I neither know what I do or say.

P.S. The King is too much indebted to Marshal de Berwick not to give him a mark of his gratitude, and the only one is to make him a grandee, which new dignity his Majesty feels himself obliged to bestow upon him. He thinks that the King his grandfather will approve of it, whatever repugnance he may have to see distinctions given, for certainly that cannot extend to a man who has just gained so important a battle for France and Spain. I have very much approved of the resolution of the King and Queen, for I like to see the goodness of their hearts on every occasion, and if I have done amiss, I ask pardon of the King.

LETTER LXXX.

TO THE SAME.

From the Retiro, May 2nd, 1707.

It transpires daily that the victory obtained over our enemies is yet more important than it was thought; their infantry were either all killed or taken. The Duke of Orleans and Marshal de Berwick are intent upon profiting by this defeat. They are now entering the kingdom of Valencia, whose conquest probably will be promptly achieved, and Arragon will doubtless share the same fate. I do not think the Archduke will escape so easily, if fortune seconds the intentions of his Royal Highness. You see that one should never despair of success, and that God changes everything in a moment when it is his pleasure. Confess the truth, Madam, that I am not insolent in good fortune, since I do not reproach you with your past chagrin, and to have had such gloomy forebodings of the future as everything appeared to you. I will forget the past, but if perchance you evince anything more of your melancholy, I will not promise you to be always so modest; I would beat you to atoms, and

give you no more quarter than has been given to the Portuguese and those English whose master, the Prince of Orange, you have so very much cherished. I cannot write to you any longer; I continue transported with joy whenever I think of the pleasure which this victory must have given to the King, the Duchess of Burgundy, and yourself, to whom I am entirely devoted.

LETTER LXXXI.

TO THE SAME.

From the Retiro, May, 1707.

Their Catholic Majesties are very glad that the King has at length determined to send them Clement, and we must hope that the clamours of the ladies upon his departure will cease when they hear of the great victory which we have obtained in Spain, and that their chagrin will give place to joy. M. Clement, who is so necessary for the Queen, and the Prince or Princess whose life is of such great importance, will be detained as short a time as possible. It is fortunate that this person, and the nurse who will accompany him, are possessed of all the good qualities which you indicate to me. Though the

Duchess of Burgundy should be pregnant, they will return in time for her confinement. The Queen was very much affected when she learnt that her sister wished to provide everything of the best quality for her, and the same persons whom she employs; they have only to be prepared against being well questioned, both here and at Versailles, for our two Princesses will certainly inform each other of the minutest particulars, which is natural, loving each other so tenderly as they do. It will be very requisite that some women should learn to dandle, when they see it done by the nurse of whom you have so good an opinion, and this will be rendering Spain a great service. The manner of rearing children in England must be excellent, since there are no straighter persons than the English, whose cleanliness in that respect I also very much approve; and I have only some difficulty respecting their legs, it appearing to me that they would have a worse shape without being swathed; because, being weak, they would not perhaps grow properly. We will, however, discuss the inconvenience which might arise from it.

If there are two Queens in Spain, there is one who will cut a poor figure, and whose reign will not, I hope, be longer than that of the players in such characters: probably she will act this part in Barcelona, for the Princess of Wolfenbottle, ere long, will reign over only a part of Catalonia, since we have reason to believe that many towns

of this province, Arragon and Valencia, will return to the allegiance of their lawful king; therefore please to be comforted when you hear of two Queens in Spain.

It is well for M. de Vendome to be very confident, but not to carry it too far. The Duke of Bavaria has written by the last post to the king, who had communicated to him plans of the campaign, which met his approbation, that he would act in concert to promote their success, and that to all appearance this campaign would be glorious to their majesties.

Marshal de Villars continues to entertain a good opinion both of his valour and skill, and being besides well satisfied with his troops, I doubt not but he will do his best. I think we shall soon have the Duke of Orleans at the Retiro; since he has written to me to that effect. I shall say nothing to you of his plans, leaving that to the ambassador, who will doubtless communicate them to the King. I do not think the stay of his Royal Highness at this court will be long, since being so unfortunate as not to have taken part in the late action, he will be over anxious to seek for some other opportunity of distinguishing himself, and he cannot do anything more worthy of his name, nor more conducive to the interests of their Majesties. You have afforded me pleasure, in giving me an insight

into the character of those who surround this Prince.

I believe all the nuns in general of the Convent of the Incarnation, which the Queen sometimes visits, to be good characters, but am not acquainted with any who are distinguished from the rest for sanctity, for which reason, instead of having recourse to them in particular, our trust is in excellent troops, who give no quarter to anybody, cutting off the heads, arms, and legs of those whom they cannot make prisoners. In this manner, they have rendered us masters of the Archduke's army, and it only depends upon them to drive him absolutely out of Spain.

It seems the last news from Italy stated that several French squadrons had arrived at Suza; there is no probability that the Duke of Savoy would have let them pass with so much politeness, in order subsequently to entrap those who followed, although the report has been circulated at Madrid that his Royal Highness would use reprisals, by taking these troops as his had been taken in the Milanese. His situation is not unfortunate, to be rid of twenty thousand French, commanded by a brave officer, who would always have given him uneasiness for the Milanese, where the Germans are becoming more hateful every day, and himself not beloved, without

reckoning that all the other Italian princes see his aggrandizement with great impatience. If they could have forseen his present position, and principally the Venetians, they would have prevented it by the forming a league; but this republic, being ill disposed towards France, and fearing the court of Vienna, was unfortunately blinded by its own passions. Naples and Sicily, from the letters I receive, edouble their fidelity to his majesty.

Cardinal de la Tremoille informs me of the Pope's bad health, and that he should be sorry for the chair to beeome vacant at a time when it would be very difficult to fill it up properly. You are very good, Madam, in wishing the King to grant favours to my brother; whatever need he may have of them to support the dignity and character with which he has honoured him; he must be content with what it shall please his Majesty to give, and it is a good deal, at this time, to be presented with an abbey worth twelve thousand francs per annum, free of all charges, as I am informed. I was also very glad of a similar gift to the Abbé de Polignac, who was as poor as Job. He is a man of family, possessed of much intelligence, and who has been unfortunate. I always address myself to you, through whom the King may know my respectful gratitude for the favours he grants to my family, and I think it is better than if I took the liberty of writing

to himself, since you know better how to speak for me than I could myself. The Duchess de Gramont has then resolved to pass her life at Versailles and Pontalie; she must find herself in better health after the resolution, and as she begins to take comfort on the death of her husband, for it appears to me that when people are much afflicted and in bad health, they feel disposed to get out of the crowd, and to seek repose in solitude.

I pity the Duchess of Mantua very much, as I know her husband particularly well, and I never conceived how a reasonable woman could be satisfied with him. I know how much the first Duchess, who was niece to the late Prince des Ursins, suffered with him, as she acquainted me with it, being very thankful, when I was at Rome, for the advice I daily gave her during the four months she remained there. I had made this Prince begin to be ashamed of always having his coachmen and footmen for rivals, and made him shed tears, by reproaching him with his low taste; but when I had lost sight of him, and he became exposed to the dissipation of Venice, he recommenced his debaucheries. Sentiments so unworthy of his birth were imputable to the bad conduct of the Princess of Inspruck, his mother, who was a woman, as you must no doubt have heard, that disgraced her name.

It appears to me that money is necessary to

make purchases, and that those who possess it would act more prudently to buy nothing; however you are more accustomed than anybody to see money agents, and appear to see nothing when they are useful for the service. Here is enough for this post, and much more than enough to importune you, if your great goodness did not enable you to suffer patiently the length of my letters.

LETTER LXXXII.

TO THE SAME

Buen-Retiro, May 16th, 1707.

The Duke of Orleans left us yesterday for Arragon, after stopping here two days on his return from Valencia, which he has reduced to submission to the King. It is probable that the rest of the kingdom will follow the example of the capital. The Prince was still greatly mortified at not having been in the battle, and I am not surprised at it, since you know how ambitious he is of glory. The more one reflects, indeed, upon this happy event, the more one is astonished; his Royal Highness assures us, that there are not more than five hundred of the enemy's infantry

remaining; we ought to be continually praising God that he permitted the enemy to be so blinded as to undertake so rash an action as that for which they have been punished. I am inconceivably impatient to learn that the King has received this great news, and I expect to find in the letter which you will send me upon the subject, that joy which you thought you should never again feel after so many misfortunes, which overwhelmed you and undermined your health. The Queen feels so much interest about it, that I have heard her say very often how delighted she was at the satisfaction you would have, and that it much increased her own. Her Majesty orders me to tell you that three things will happen which you desire, the first of which has already taken place, the victory being complete. The Archduke, pressed in Catalonia on all sides, will be compelled to quit the country; and his allies and himself, no longer seeing a prospect of dethroning Philip V., will be under the necessity of making a reasonable peace for all sides. But she says, she will not engage for all these things taking place unless you will resolve to banish from your mind that gloomy melancholy which gives you such distressing forebodings of all sorts of misfortunes. She will, moreover, give you a Prince of Asturias as robust as herself: he gives her such dreadful thumps, which I have myself felt, that there is reason to believe he will be as strong as a Turk

if he grows in proportion. I cannot repent having pressed the journey of M. Clement, since it is possible the Queen might be deceived a month, as her present size would induce us to believe.

If I had been in your court, I should not certainly have failed being hurried away by the example of the courtiers, who have so much caressed the unfortunate man who had premeditated running away with one of our Princes, and I should not be his dupe in believing that he only intended to fix upon a distinguished individual. Do not laugh at me, but I shall certainly taste more than once the milk of the nurses, to see if it is good, and I shall learn, in case of necessity, how to dandle the Prince, for there is no character in which I shall not esteem it an honour to serve their majesties. It must be true that you preserve to me the honour of your friendship, since you assure me of it, and it is equally true that there is nothing upon earth I am so ambitious of deserving. I am not surprised that the Duke of Orleans has written so favourably respecting the King and Queen, for it is only doing them justice; but I am very much obliged to his Royal Highness for speaking of me, since my merit falls far short of my wishes: he has assured me that our King was never better. His Majesty requires to be blooded and purged from time to time, for I have seen him eat in a manner to create a redundancy of blood and humours, but he is in

good hands when under the care of M. Fagon. You banter, Madam, by reproaching me that it is a long time since I have spoken to you of the ambassador. He has appeared to me till now to be advancing in grand style towards perfection, but you wish to appropriate that career to yourself. You have spoiled him for me by your excessive praises, which his modesty and virtue cannot resist, and I perceive how vain he is when I tell him of your good opinion. I fear following his example, if you continue writing to me such flattering things as you do; spare me then, I beseech you, for I know not whether you would not do me more injury by praising than my enemies by blaming me, when, moreover, you make it known that you do not agree with them in that respect.

It is fortunate, Madam, that you are pleased to take the trouble of following the march of Spanish affairs; do not get tired of it, I entreat you. I think Cardinal d' Estrées does very well in marrying his nephew to Mademoiselle de Nevers, and he must be obliged to Madame de Noailles for having revived this match, especially if the Duke de Nevers and his lady should have an eye to the conduct of the Duke d'Estrées, whom they will make drink the wine of Italy instead of Champagne, which will be a great reduction.

At last, Madam, you will permit your relations

to approach you! Has no harm yet happened to you from keeping such company? Was the King tired of Madame de Caylus, when he did her the honour of conducting her to Trianon? Have you yawned in conversing with the lady of the Marquis de Vilette, the insipidity of whose conversation I am acquainted with, and do you repent of having the Duchess de Noailles by your side, because she is the wife of a man so very unworthy of your esteem and friendship? Own, all these mischievous jokes apart, that I had great reason in reproaching you, for keeping at a distance relations who deserve your affection and protection, for, upon my word, you cannot have better friends than these persons. You ask me whether I know Madame de Villette, to which I reply, by saying I do, that I have noticed the flashings of her wit, the agreeableness of her conversation, as well as of her face, and the goodness of her heart, of which I have received many proofs. Madame de Caylus appreciates the friendship which you show her, but it does not render her more proud, which still increases my affection and esteem for her. I thought of writing only two lines to you, but my inclination surmounts the fear which I ought to have in sending you letters of too great a length.

LETTER LXXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, May 23d, 1707.

NEVER did an account give me so much pleasure as that contained in your letter of the 8th instant, of the joy which the King and all his court experienced, on hearing the news of the victory; their Majesties expected it with great impatience, and I counted every moment till it arrived. The Duchess of Burgundy has written a charming letter to the Queen upon this subject, and which shows her extreme goodness of heart. All that you describe to me, from the officer of the guards coming to announce the arrival of M. de Chamillard, who showed M. de Silly into your little room at Marly, whilst you were supping in your closet, till his Majesty came to the door himself to communicate this great news, appears to be so natural, that I imagined seeing you throw your napkin on the ground, and running to hear what was said on the occasion; Madame de Dangeau posting off to write to her husband; Madame de Heudicourt walking as if she had good legs, without scarcely knowing what she was about;

M. de Marsan jumping upon a chair to show his agility in spite of the gout, with the same air that a rope-dancer would have done. As for the Duke of Burgundy, who is, I believe, occasionally absent, I am astonished that in the first moments of his joy he did not take some lady for a billiard ball, and hit her with the queue which he had in his hand. In short, you will have no difficulty in persuading me, that all France was delighted with so advantageous a victory for our two Kings, which consolidates the throne of his Catholic Majesty. I can easily conceive that the great emotion which such good fortune caused in you, Madam, may have given you the fever, which I hope will not last long, and that the sources of chagrin, which are beginning to disperse, will be followed by the restoration of your health. You will daily hear from this country of the happy results of the victory: almost the whole kingdom of Valencia is reduced to obedience; that of Arragon will soon be so, and the Duke of Orleans, who joins his troops to a detachment of those which Marshal de Berwick commanded, will find himself at the head of an army which will reduce the Catalonians, and force the Archduke into Barcelona, where he will get perhaps tired of stopping, and the inhabitants of seeing him. As to the King of Portugal, he seems as if he would soon sue to us for peace, upon such terms as we

please. The grandees of Spain, who are not well disposed, would be very glad for it to be granted him, considering this little corner of the monarchy as an asylum where they would find protection in case they were discontented with their sovereign. But as for the people, who have no other view than the glory of the King and the honour of the nation, they would be delighted at the conquest of Portugal, which they always consider as an usurpation. You may depend upon the correctness of what I here state to you.

M. de Vendome is naturally fortunate, and so is my Lord Marlborough: why should not the latter cease to continue so, when God has begun to decide in favour of the just cause of our Kings, and that they should humble themselves in their good fortune as in their bad? It is certain that the love which the King our sovereign has always shown for religion, and the piety and virtue of their Catholic Majesties, should make us hope for the end of a war which may recompense them for so many great and estimable qualities. Our ambassador and Marshal de Berwick also richly merit the praises you bestow on them, each exerting himself to the utmost in his station. The former had need of what has happened, to support him under the weight of business, which I am always apprehensive will overpower him. When we see that our labours prosper, we per-

severe; he and I have thought that this affair would be of great service to M. de Chamillard, whom I have often pitied.

My pride has been highly gratified to find that my idea respecting Prince de Vaudemont has not been entirely rejected; I mentioned it, rather that I might conceal nothing of what passes in my mind from you, than from any hope of its success not presuming myself capable of giving such solid advice as may be followed; meanwhile I cannot help telling you, that good nature is carried too far, when from fear of giving a little uneasiness to certain persons who are in office, others are not fixed upon who might do better for the state in such important conjunctures; and so much the more, as those who are thus spared do not think themselves capable of doing their duty, for in this case it would be unjust to complain of a change.

The Duchess of Savoy has written to the Queen, to say that her father had a very bad cold, which obliged him to keep his bed, and that he had had three attacks of tertian fever. His Royal Highness does all that he can to inflame his blood, and it would be desirable that his devotion, to which allusion has been made, should tranquillize him; he would then be better, and other Princes would enjoy more repose.

I will not believe that the Duchess of Burgundy is pregnant; I will give her a whole year to amuse herself, and run about where she pleases,

provided she does not stop up too late, and that she only eats at seasonable hours, when her digestion will be easy, for if she does not take care, late hours will kill her, especially if she makes irregular meals. So much sadness and so much inclination to weep, which you say she has, give me however much pain, and furnish a reason why I should be still more obliged to her for having honoured me with one of her letters, in which she only speaks of joy, and of her participating in mine. I enclose the answer, which you will have the goodness to present to her. I shall take care not to apologize for this liberty, since you wish me to believe that you are offended when I do not give you my commissions; thus it is arranged between you and me, that you shall receive my vulgarities with your usual politeness.

You have done perfectly well to save my reputation, in saying nothing of the proposal which I had made you about certain silk borders, as I should have been considered by M. de Langlée with the contempt which ought to be entertained for low born souls. Every one places his glory upon a different object in this world; I am very happy, however, to be of your opinion, that a Prince of Asturias is not less worthy of our respect, in a very neat and plain bed, than he would be in one richly embroidered with gold. The duchess de Beauvillers has done wonders in the purchases she has undertaken to make, hav-

ing brought them down to a price proportioned to my parsimony. I have evinced my satisfaction, and you will have the goodness to praise her also. Nurses will soon arrive here: all the women of Biscay that were represented admirable, and as having healthy appearance, have got the itch, and there are only one or two throughout all these provinces that are coming. We shall have some from old Castile and the frontiers of Navarre, but what will astonish you most is, that, notwithstanding our activity, I doubt whether more than a dozen can be collected together, some of whom have been lately confined, and others on the point of being so; they will be fine company for me, and a pretty occupation to torment myself when they are confined, to humour them, to prevent them from scratching one another's eyes out; to see that they have not the itch, to which they are very subject; to ascertain if they eat moderately; to find out their tempers; and after all this, to add to it the choice which the physicians shall make of her, whom they may think best qualified to nurse the Prince: do not you think, Madam, that I shall be highly amused? I imagine you to say: "I do not pity her, for she might get rid of one half of the trouble, it being impossible but one of the Queen's ladies of honour, or some other reasonable person, would give a helping hand in all this bustle." My answer is quite ready; to which, I think, you have no reply. One may

live years with the greatest part of the people in this court, without knowing what they have done, and what they are capable of doing, of which the following is quite a recent instance. The Queen had one of these *senoras de honor*,* the daughter of a Portuguese lord, who went to Madrid when this country revolted against the King of Spain. His fidelity induced Philip IV. to give him and his daughter a favourable reception. She went to the court of the late Emperor at Vienna, returned with the Queen, mother of Charles II., who having married the King's sister to the Emperor, his brother, who became a widow; this lady, who had accompanied her, returned a second time into Spain, to be near the person of the Queen-mother. She was there till her death, and was afterwards with the Queen Dowager, who is at Bayonne, and the present reigning Queen. This lady, who is called the Marchioness de Llaneras, was made choice of by her Majesty, as the healthiest, although the oldest of the ladies of honour, to accompany her to Burgos. She excused herself, as well as the other lady whom the Queen had appointed, under pretence that they could not give her the money which she required. It is to be observed, that they had no occasion for it, since their expences were paid as well as those of their

* Ladies of honour.

servants, without their paying anything themselves. When her Majesty returned, and the King deliberated in council at the Escurial, about letting the ladies remain where they had retired during the Queen's journey, at which time they left the palace the day after our departure, without saying a word, to go, some to their relatives at Madrid, or in the country, and others to convents, the greatest part of whom had fathers, brothers, or lovers, who were known to be in correspondence with the enemy; their Majesties, in their great kindness, wished to take three of them back again, in order to show their consideration for persons of quality who had served them, and who were poor. The orders were no sooner given, than a great deal was said against the Marchioness who was one of the number fixed upon; she was accused of being at heart a Portuguese; of having visited the enemy's camp, commanded by the Marquis de Las Minas; and of having received in this city, some of her relations at her own house; we were, moreover, warned, that she was a very dangerous woman, and that she had herself strangled her daughter, who was married, under some suspicions of bad conduct. It is to be observed, that if these are idle stories, it is very wicked to have invented them, and if they are not, the warning was very tardy. I am well convinced that this lady would never have been spoken against if all the others had returned as well as her, and that it was envy

which impelled them to throw out all these surmises. As however, it would not have been prudent to keep her, and on the other hand it was desirable not to do anything which might injure her reputation, it was decided to get the Queen's confessor to speak to her, and tell her of all the reports in question, which, although their Majesties would not believe, it was proper, in order to remove every cause for ill-founded surmises, that she should ask to retire, as she was unable, through her great age, to sustain the fatigues of the service, that she might, to give a better colouring to it, remain two or three months longer. She followed this advice, and the same salary was continued to her after retiring as she had before, all which passed off very quietly. In whom then can confidence be placed? And am I wrong for entering into details respecting the preservation of persons who are so dear to us? This is a pretty long letter, which, however, was necessary, in order that you might be fully informed of everything. I think I cannot be wrong in following your advice, therefore I entreat you to tell me so if you think I can do better?

LETTER LXXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, May 30th, 1707.

I HAVE no letter from you by the last post, Madam, and provided that it is not indisposition which has prevented you from writing, I will have patience. If the good news has given you the fever, I fear lest you may have it often, for it would seem that our Spanish affairs assume such an appearance, that we cannot dispense from acquainting you of them from time to time. The Duke of Orleans has just captured Saragossa, and will not stop there. You must, then, take courage, if you please, for, according to every probability, his Royal Highness will make other conquests. I will not take upon myself to say, that I shall not fall ill of joy as well as yourself, if you could inform me that M. de Vendome had obtained a victory, for these great events possess me so, that they have absolutely deprived me of sleep for several nights. My pleasure has been almost equally great on the discovery of some apparently good nurses, which compensates me for all the trouble I have had on that account. Eleven arrived yesterday at the Retiro, with all

their retinue, and the twelfth is expected the day after to-morrow; seven of them have brought their children, and five are still pregnant. I thought that too much honour could not be paid them; that it was necessary to get into the habit of respecting persons who were to be employed in nursing a prince or a princess, born of one of the first families upon earth; therefore, besides two or three of the Queen's carriages, which went to meet them, I sent a gentleman to compliment them in form. They made their entrance by the gate of Atocha, where the people gave them their blessings, and came to this palace, where they alighted at a garden which is only open to their Majesties. I went to receive them at the end of a gallery of the Queen's apartment; her Majesty was looking on from a balcony; I embraced them all heartily, and afterwards conducted them to her Majesty, who in her turn did not disdain to come forward to receive them. It was then, Madam, that all the little infants which they held in their arms commenced a wonderful chorus, and showed by the strength of their voices, the goodness of their mothers' milk. The whole party fell on their knees to kiss the Queen's hand; some wept for joy, some were in an ecstasy, and others showed their delight by a thousand flattering and tender expressions, at which you would certainly have been moved as well as myself. I would have given the whole world for the King our master,

the Duchess of Burgundy, and yourself to have been present at this scene. I took them afterwards to their apartments, which are surrounded with gardens, not so beautiful, indeed, as those of Marly, but where there is verdure and good air. They were feasted in a hall with a grand collation, of which they stood in need. After this I conducted them back to their rooms, which are handsomely carpetted: here I ordered everything suitable and convenient for them, and sent away all the attendants who had followed me, and were of no use to them. Some time after, the King and Queen paid them a visit, which occasioned fresh transports of joy on seeing themselves at the feet of their King. When supper time arrived, in order to get them habituated to me, I sat at the head of the table, upon a very pretty straw chair, and they upon carpets, according to the custom of the country. I tasted myself what was served up to them, to ascertain that it was not too highly flavoured nor too gross, and finding it to my mind, I took the opportunity of supping with them, and we drank to the health of all the royal family and the expected Prince. It was then that I perceived emotions of fear and hope in the breasts of all these rivals. I have but seldom, I assure you, made a more agreeable repast than that which I have just described: and I flatter myself, that you would have had almost as much pleasure as myself. Several of these women have

not disagreeable faces; none have bad teeth; their complexions indicate good health, and the whole faculty, up to the present time, find no reason to reject any of them. We shall see in the sequel how they answer; I intend to be present at their confinement, and assiduously attend to everything relative thereto, in order to acquire more experience, the better to serve the Queen, when her turn comes. I intreat you, to be obliged to me for this long narrative, for you see that I am not without something to do; but except my indispensable duty, what ought I not to quit for you, Madam, who are so worthy of being loved and honoured.

LETTER LXXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, June 5th, 1707.

I ONLY received your's of the 21st ultimo yesterday, and which was brought, I know not through what cause, by a foreigner, as also the letters from the court to the ambassador and their Majesties. The ordinary post before this brought us none at all, and we are unable to assign a

reason for it, unless the packets were given to M. de Silly, who went direct for Arragon, and who will doubtless return them to us after joining the Duke of Orleans. He has written this morning to the King, that Xativa was at length taken, with the exception of a small castle, which had been left blockaded, and which would soon surrender of itself. They had been obliged to put every body to the sword, except some nuns. Although no people ever more richly merited such a chastisement, which ought to be a warning to others who are so obstinately bent in continuing to be disloyal to their sovereign, this event is very horrible: war is the cause of many crimes, and I know not how princes who carry on unjust ones can hope that God will pardon them. It is not in our power to press matters on the side of Catalonia; had there been cannon and ammunition, the siege of Lerida would have been begun sooner, but these supplies could not be sent from France, as was desired. I agree with you, Madam, that you cannot be very tranquil while in the expectation of an action between the two armies in Flanders; however, since ours is as strong as the enemy, we should hope that M. de Vendome's good fortune will not forsake him on this occasion. Whatever gloomy courtiers may say, I cannot agree with them, that if we obtained a victory, we should derive no great advantages from it in those parts; for our superiority would humble the pride of the

league, and render it more tractable in the terms of peace. I am more apprehensive from Marshal de Tessé's fearing what his Royal Highness may undertake against Prince Eugene, than the forces even of this Prince with his mischievous disposition. I own your anxiety is just as to what may happen: however, when I reflect that the King, who possesses more information and prudence than any one, does not change his general, I think we may take courage.

Madame de Nemours was in the right to see her enemies, and to keep the postilions booted a long time. She always appeared to me to have but little relish for the other world. I had already heard of the sudden death of M. de Nevers, and the different opinions of his wife's property. Protected as she is by the Princes, she has reason to hope being placed at her ease in her widowhood, and to pass, at least, a less rambling life than during the life-time of the Duke de Nevers. The Duchess of Sforza acts the part of a good aunt in soliciting the dignity for her nephew, which is very kind of her.

I am not surprised that the Prince de Vaudemont is such a favourite at Versailles, and I should be astonished if he remained a long time at court without exciting great jealousy. Would there be any great harm in your wishing to fathom his character, by conversing with him on every subject, and asking his opinion upon them? I like

nothing so much as to make persons reason who cut a distinguished figure in the world, and who, from long experience, have had opportunities of observing the faults of the generality of men, as well as their good qualities: there is much to be gained from such knowledge. I know but too well your inclination for retirement, and wish to God, Madam, you would keep a little less aloof from the intercourse of mankind!

M. Clement is just arrived, and I quit you to go and welcome him. I resume my pen to inform you that the Queen is very glad to see this celebrated man, whom the King has had the goodness to send us, and she has in a short time put a number of questions to him, which he has well answered. Her Majesty made particular enquiries after the Duchess of Burgundy and yourself. Madame de la Salle only arrived this morning, because her chaise broke down twenty leagues from Madrid; I was never more surprised than when both told me, that they had come from Bayonne to Madrid, without a single person who understood a word of Spanish, except a man they met with by mere chance. I had wholly relied upon the Duke de Gramont, who assured me twice or thrice that nothing should be wanting, and I might depend upon him. I do not know how he, who is attentive to everythin grelative to their Majesties, should have forgotten to send somebody with these poor people to take care of them, and to procure all the

accommodations which travellers find so great a difficulty in obtaining in Spain, unless accompanied by a conductor who has acquaintances in all the towns on the road; I had an excellent one ready at Bayonne, whom the Duke de Gramont knew very well, and to whom he might have given this commission. We will make amends, if possible, for all the inconveniences that M. Clement and Madame de la Salle have experienced: they relate their sad adventures very humorously, and I think the Duchess of Burgundy will hear them repeated more than once. We have already had a conversation together upon the Queen's situation, and upon the nurses, which will not certainly be the last; and I am much deceived if we do not agree very well. The Queen has yet seen nothing of the child's linen, because she had to write to-day, and she wishes to examine it in detail at her leisure. Their Majesties refer to the ambassador, as to the cause of despatching this extra courier, as the object is well worth the trouble, although I do not entertain sanguine hopes in respect to it, yet it would be imprudent to neglect such a matter. I become constantly more sensible of your kindnesses and am most respectfully yours.

LETTER LXXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, June 13th, 1707.

Your letter of the 15th ultimo, as I expected, came round through Arragon before it reached this, as M. de Silly, who went to join his Royal Highness, forwarded it to me only a few days ago. We learnt by the usual post, that Marshal Villars has forced the lines, which is a great achievement, and a fine commencement of the campaign; it must certainly have surprised you, for I doubt whether you expected such an event. This success must alarm the German princes in the neighbourhood, and should induce them to recall their troops either from Flanders or Italy, which in either case would diminish their forces, and leave us more at our ease. I did not hear from you by the last post, which I attribute to your grief for the death of Madame de Montespan. I can well conceive all that your good and noble heart must have felt on this occasion, and I always find you equally deserving of praise on every account. As I know that the Princes and Princesses, who are most interested in this loss, are not over fond of receiving letters, which would be, perhaps, a tax upon their politeness to answer, I thought it better to beg of you, Madam, to have the goodness to say

all that is most expressive of my respect, which cannot go through a better channel. But if you should think it proper for me to do something more, be so good as to say so, since I can never do wrong by following your advice. I am now about to beg your friendly offices, in favour of a man, whom you formerly recommended to me, and it is no bad omen for him to have so much interested me as to become his agent with you, who have brought me acquainted with him. I mean the Marquis de Brancas, who is earnestly desirous of the King fixing upon him to compliment this court upon the birth of the Prince of Asturias. His good sense, politeness, and zeal in the service have procured him the esteem of their Majesties, and I am persuaded they will see this office conferred upon him with pleasure. He lost in the battle of Almanza, a very promising brother, whom he affectionately loved; the Duke of Orleans makes much of him, and he appears to me well adapted to fulfil this commission, if the King has not otherwise disposed of it.

I have heard nothing of the ridiculous acts which are reported relative to the Countess de Gramont, but I own I am a little curious to know them, to ascertain to what lengths the malignity or folly of people who talk so unreasonably can go. I am much surprised that the Queen's box of linen had not been shown to the Duchess of Burgundy, nor to you, and I should have thought the reason that prevented Madame de Beauvillers

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from doing so, was lest it should be considered too costly, if the Duchess had not assured me that it is not so, and that she has confined herself to good taste and neatness, as I have often desired her. It is not yet arrived, and when it does, I will give you my opinion; however, I certainly expected that the things we had occasion for, would have cost the King of Spain more money.

LETTER LXXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, June 24th, 1707.

You will have seen, Madam, by a letter from the Queen, that she prevented me from writing to you by the last post, because she gave me a commission to visit her apartment at Madrid, in which her Majesty ordered me to get something arranged. This order appeared to me a little arbitrary, since it deprived me of the pleasure I always feel in writing to you as often as I possibly can; but I will compensate myself to-day for it, in replying to your three letters, of May 29th, June 5th, and 12th, one of which had gone round by Arragon before it reached me. I begin with the first, in which you rejoice with me at Marshal de Villars having forced the lines. This action is so brilliant and fortunate, as to make us pardon

him a little vanity, and if those who call this general mad, serve the King as well as he does, I could wish that every body became so, for there are too many wiseacres, or, at least, people who think they are so, by running no risks; I am, however, convinced that things must sometimes be left to chance, provided they are not carried to a degree of temerity worthy only of the heroes of romance. But I could explain myself better to you on this subject in a personal interview.

The Duchess of Burgundy has promised to forward you regularly my packets, and God grant she may keep her word, and that some parties of pleasure may not happen to make her forget it, especially now that she is not pregnant, and will be disposed to make the best use of her time! I cannot help being glad, whatever desire I may have for her to become the mother of many princes, that she is not at present in the family way.

I enjoy our good fortune at having destroyed the Archduke's army, and I will not anticipate the bugbear of succour with which we aret hreatened to be sent to him. The Elector of Bavaria writes to his Majesty to say, that the English Government has determined to send a number of troops into Spain. They must indeed be numerous to be a match for ours; they are not yet ready; and having come by sea, they must require great preparation and expence. This is of importance to

us, in as much as it gains time for his Royal Highness and Marshal de Berwick, and what they stand in need of will reach them soon enough to enable them to capture Lerida, which is the most eligible point for keeping the Catalonians and Arragonese in check. But everything that was expected from France has experienced great delay, and you know, I think, that money is as scarce as artillery, which will postpone the intention of the Duke of Orleans to march on the side of Portugal, but which he never had any idea of, until he could leave the place where he is in safety, and free from apprehension of the Archduke returning to it.

Allow me to ask you, Madam, why you are so much afraid of an action in Flanders, when you know that the King's army is in such fine order, and stronger than that of the enemy, and with the hitherto fortunate M. de Vendome for its commander? His Majesty writes to the King, his grandson, that there is no probability of Marlborough being inclined to risk a battle, which does not evince that he feels himself in a condition to do so, and is a presumption that if he was obliged to fight, it would be to his disadvantage. I cannot, therefore, be anxious for Flanders, but I could wish the German Princes to be so alarmed, as to withdraw their troops, in order to defend their own states, which are threatened by Marshal de Villars. Your apprehensions lest the Duke of

Savoy broke his promise with respect to the troops which marched through his states, will, I am sure, have given you more than one sleepless night; however, they arrived in safety at their destination. I saw some French officers this morning from Italy, who think that it would be very difficult to penetrate unto Dauphiny and Provence, provided the French were upon the alert and determined to prevent it, of which there can be no doubt, since the King relies upon the capacity of the commander of his army, who will certainly do his best. The Viceroys of Naples and Sicily write to tell us, that all the nobles cannot show more zeal than they do, which is confirmed to me by Cardinal de la Tremoille, in whom they place great confidence. He adds, that it is painful to him to see such good subjects abandoned, and that with the least assistance nothing would have been more easy for them than to preserve these two kingdoms. It is certain, that had the troops been sent which the King of Spain had in those parts, it would have afforded them an inspiring consolation, because it would have induced them to expect greater succours afterwards. My brother has explained himself upon this subject, in his despatches to the court, and his Majesty has often spoken of it, which is all that can be done, as what the King shall after that decide upon, will always be for the best. I returned to this country, so much affected by the King's gracious behaviour

to me at Marly, and so much impressed with what I know to be just, great, and amiable in him, that I have nothing more to desire, except that his Majesty should believe I constantly endeavour to render myself more worthy of the continuance of his kindness, which affects me much more, because it comes from the most upright of men, than because it is honourable to me to have the approbation of so great a monarch. Had I, moreover, as you tell me, the felicity of rendering myself agreeable to him in company, I would own to you ingenuously, that it only rested with his Majesty to perceive that his society was very acceptable to me. The truth is, although I may boast of having conversed with the most agreeable people, and of the greatest intelligence, in France, Italy and Spain, I have never been so well pleased with them as with his Majesty. You will confess that this avowal is very candid.

Whether the Queen be pregnant of a Prince or Princess, the child is certainly very vigorous. On every account, it would suit better for a Prince of Asturias to be robust than an Infanta. I entreat you not to be uneasy about it, for neither you nor I have to do with that, it is as heaven shall appoint.

You advise me, then, to learn how to dandle future children, and you ask me whether I know any thing about weaning, or the consistence of good milk. Would not one say, at such a ques-

tion, that I never heard the physicians talk and the nurses gossip, for I know their language perhaps better than that which I am obliged to speak, and as to the posture, I must place myself in to dandle, it would suit my figure perhaps better than my rheumatism. I shall, therefore, get Madame de la Salle, to teach some good Spanish widow this occupation; and as to the rest, I protest to you, that I should make no scruple of habituating myself to this exercise, or any other, for the service of their Majesties.

Since the King continues in good health, to judge from his appetite, I cannot be sorry that he remains longer at Marly than M. Fagon could wish, as I think he takes more exercise there than elsewhere, and that his digestion must be better for it. I could wish, however, that his Majesty abstained more at supper, for it is well known, that nothing is more unhealthy than to load the stomach in the evening, which is ultimately the cause of vapours and other serious complaints. I preserve my own health, merely by making light meals, and eating very little meat; but by way of retaliation, I take breakfast and a collation, as if I was only fifteen, except that a trifle satisfies me.

I have hesitated some time about showing a passage of your letter to the ambassador, purporting, that you should be very sorry to oppose his progress to perfection, but I at last de-

termined to read it to him. What I foresaw happened: he blushed up to the eyes, his modesty taking the alarm at hearing himself praised by a person of your consideration, and more especially knowing himself, he says, to be so very imperfect.

I did not know that the King had given to Marshal de Cœuvre everything which his late brother had, but I am not surprised at it.

Since the Princes and the Princesses have not worn mourning for Madame de Montespan, nor received formal visits of condolence, I have done well in not writing to them, and desiring you to have the goodness to say on my behalf, on this occasion, how respectfully I am interested in all that concerns them.

As to the Princess de Conti, whose mother has been named, it is natural and civil in her to wear mourning, to do honour to her relations, and it appears to me that she discharges her duty amply in that respect. I received a letter from the Prince de Vaudemont from Marly, in which he expresses himself enchanted with the place and grateful to the King. I could wish to know, if our great Princess feels more at home with his polite manners, than with the vulgar ones of the greatest part of the courtiers of the day. You say that you have seen the Prince de Vaudemont only once, and that you are delighted with him: why not see him often? Is it because you will

deprive yourself of the society of a person of mind and merit, and who can converse with you upon every subject? This is carrying your scruples or indifference to worldly things a little too far.

From the moment the war broke out, I have never ceased to wish for peace. The ardour of my wishes is increased by your promising me, that the letters I shall receive from you, when peace is made, will be full of humorous and playful ideas: you are not without admirers in your serious and sad reflections, for they are all fraught with reason, since all that you fear for the future may happen, and the misfortunes which you have witnessed, must give you reason to fear experiencing others of the same nature. But reason is sometimes so insupportable, that I think there is a kind of wisdom in not always obeying so correctly its dictates, and it is better to deviate from it a little, without absolutely losing sight of it altogether, and thus amuse the imagination by anticipating future happiness, which gives us the liberty of passing our time more gaily and dissipating a portion of the melancholy which is ultimately destructive. I own that I am a little affected by it, and that when through adverse circumstances or unpleasant events, I feel myself attacked by this humour, I endeavour to build the most delightful castles in the air that I can. I have derived great benefit from this practise, and I advise you to follow my example, if you possibly can.

I am very sorry that Mademoiselle d'Aumale could not be your secretary to the letter which I have just replied to, least your head-ache should be increased by the pains which you have taken in writing it with your own hand, which I heartily salute.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, June 26th, 1707.

I SHALL be more cautious in future, Madam, when I give you certain descriptions of what I imagine is passing where you are, since you threaten to show them to persons who are interested, for they will not be so indulgent to me as you are, and might possibly think me a mischievous joker, which is a bad character.

If M. de Marlborough sends a detachment to Germany, you will be at ease as to Flanders.

In spite of all that the Duke of Savoy has done to prevent a detachment being sent to Naples, one has been sent of ten or twelve thousand men, which will weaken his Royal Highness, and consequently disable him from injuring us; this cannot fail to be gratifying to Marshal de Tessé. I cannot help

being astonished that a Prince, who has so much sense as the Duke of Savoy, can cause it to be said to the Duchess of Burgundy, that the war which he carries on diminishes nothing of his affection for her; the respect which I have for him prevents me offering any remarks upon such a compliment, and compels me to be silent.

We are not yet for refusing peace to the Portuguese; we must first confine the Archduke to a small corner of Catalonia; everything must proceed better in Flanders, Germany, and Italy, which you do not believe, and the Hungarian malcontents must continue to alarm the Emperor. In such a case, which I do not consider impossible, why should not the Duke of Orleans, towards the end of next autumn, enter, with a large victorious army, a small country, in a state of consternation, and which could not oppose considerable forces to those under his command? What a conquest would such a kingdom be for the King of Spain, which has been usurped from him, and which will embarrass him till such time as he is master of it? Truly, it would be a very glorious thing for a French Prince to restore him this crown, after the ingratitude which the Portuguese have shown to the King, our master, who was their benefactor. It is a vengeance, worthy of him, thus to dispose of crowned heads. The reigning Prince of this country deserves nothing else, for he will always be satisfied, provided he is suffered to govern his chaplains

and band of musicians; and we will provide him an excellent one of the latter from Italy. As to the Archduke, I have a long time wished, as well as yourself, that the Duke de Noailles might have to show him the beauties of Marly, as he is better qualified than any one to discharge such a commission well. Meanwhile, he is reducing a great many places to their allegiance, and secures, by his prudence and the high opinion they have of him in Catalonia, I know not how many people, who wait only to declare themselves in favour of his Catholic Majesty, to see the Duke of Orleans' army in possession of Lerida: it is a great pity that your nephew has not more troops, as he would turn them to good account.

The Queen, and not I, will be the Prince's governess; I have been so till now of the nurses, but the under governess will superintend them, until they are in employ, for then she will have an eye upon her who shall be chosen, and will devote herself entirely to her duties, at least she promises to do so. She gives satisfaction to their Majesties, who find her intelligent, and of easy manners, and who appears very grateful for the honour of having confided to her so precious a child. Do not think that I shall altogether disburthen myself of the trouble of interfering with what shall concern him, for my affection will not allow it. Her Majesty, this lady and I, will act in concert, in order to foresee and prevent every thing that is to be feared.

We shall omit nothing; we shall pray to God to enlighten us, and leave the issue in his hands.

The Prince de Vaudemont's agent has just left me, having been to inform me that his master is transported with joy at all the civilities which he receives from the royal family. When his wife comes to Versailles after forty years absence, she will be scarcely known, and she will scarcely know others; but I think she will find a greater change in manners than in faces. She has always obtained distinction wherever she has been, by her affability, and the care she has taken to oblige whenever she could.

I have heard that Monseigneur had the Duchess at his parties oftener than formerly, and that the Duke of Burgundy had taken a great fancy to the Princess de Conti, who was becoming a devotee.

I have but poor hopes that the Duchess of Burgundy will follow my advice, for I am neither made to give it nor she to profit from it, and I should think with more probability, that she will continue to run about in cold and hot weather; that she will keep late hours, even till daylight, when it pleases her; that she will eat whatever she likes, and whenever she pleases; and then that she will find herself much indisposed by it, that she will become very thin, that it will do her great injury, and that at last she will be in despair at having ruined her health; finally, Madam, the Princess will only follow her own inclinations, and

my fear is, that she will repent of it too late. Do not fail, I beg of you, to tell her of my prophecy; I am persuaded she will agree with me, since she is so candid and sincere.

If our unhappy friend wished to drown himself, Madam, we ought to stretch forth our hand to prevent him from doing so; the kindness of the thing towards him, is conferred on a man of whose attachment he cannot doubt, since he has always been devoted to his person. His sorrow, which induces him to take steps that do not perhaps please his Majesty, only spring from this attachment: so that it would be a generous action to restore him to a sense of his duty, and it is to you that this work should be allotted.

I have heard by the way of Genoa, that the Duke of Savoy's illness was not so dangerous as had been reported, although he had not as yet recovered; the Duchess has written to the Queen to say, that he is still affected with fever, and that he is about to take bark. I never wished to see any person become a devotee more than his Royal Highness, provided his devotion be sincere.

Madame de Caylus cannot be too often with you, any more than the Duchess de Noailles, and, if you vex me, Madame de Villette; never expect any quarter from me on this subject, though you should accuse me of tyrannizing over you. If they were capable of possessing the faults, which you say render women insup-

portable, who would prevent you from correcting them? Make use of the power you have over the parties in question, and exercise your empire with rigour, until you shall have induced them to hold snuff in abhorrence, and only to eat what is sufficient for nature, and not to live to eat; always to have a bodice; never to lean or loll before those towards whom they owe respect; to rise at eight in the morning, and retire at eleven at night; having nothing extravagant in their dress; to be polite with everybody; and only retaining their vulgarity, in order to tell you without affectation how sincerely they love you. Would you deprive them of your presence, if they were such as I represent them? and how could you live without them, if they are strangers, as I believe they are, to the greatest part of these imperfections.

You draw a picture of the way in which you like women; I have shown it to the Queen, and her Majesty agrees with me that you have drawn your own, without being aware of it. I expect from your candour an avowal that you recognise yourself in the sketch; we shall see, Madam, whether I have not too good an opinion of you, by the manner in which you will reply to this matter.

The ambassador is to write to the King by this post, for the purpose of ascertaining his sentiments on two points, which appear to us of im-

portance. The first is concerning what regards the Princes of the blood in France, who are present at the accouchement of the Queens, and who have the same interest in that of the Queen of Spain. It is M. Hersan, who has doubtless the honour of being known to you, that has made this remark; and who thinks it will be necessary to give them notice of the event, in order that it may not be said in future times, that this formality has been neglected, as it might otherwise give rise to wars among the descendants of our Kings. M. Amelot will enter more fully into this subject than I do. The second point relates to the embarrassment we feel as to the best mode of proceeding with regard to the Spaniards, when the Queen is confined. It has not been hitherto the custom for any person to enter the room, except those whose assistance is required; neither the grandees nor their wives have any privilege of being present; yet, in our actual situation, when our enemies will circulate a report that the child is surreptitious, as evil disposed persons already say in Madrid, I do not know whether it would not be better to summon the principal officers of their Majesties household, together with their wives, the Cardinal, Inquisitor-General, and the Presidents of all the Councils, of whom several are grandees, in order that they may be witnesses. This precaution, though new, and which our enemies will not fail to interpret to their own advantage,

is nevertheless, in my opinion, better for us than for them. It is true, that it has never been done while the house of Austria reigned; but the change of succession seems to authorise this innovation; and in conclusion, if the Queen is delivered alone, there will be more room for saying the child is surreptitious, than if there were a number of important personages present. We wait, therefore, for what it shall please the King to decide. It only remains for me to ask pardon for having written to you about so many things: you would not have time to read them if you were any where but in your solitude of Saint Cyr, where I envy the honour and pleasure of your presence to those who inhabit that agreeable and sacred spot.

P.S. M. Amelot has made an observation with regard to what I had the honour of mentioning to you, relative to my thinking it prudent to have some persons of rank in the Queen's chamber during her accouchement: it appears to be very just, and I think with him, that, as the Dukes of Berry and Orleans will succeed, and are, thank God, full of health, the precaution of which he and myself have spoken of having witnesses, is not perhaps so very necessary, except any misfurtune happens to the King, and that the Archduke, being very popular in this country, his creatures might not profit by such an occasion to try and place the crown on his head. It is diffi-

cult to believe that such disasters can occur, and to reason on a matter of this nature; but as death often takes place when it is least expected, it is the part of wisdom to foresee all the accidents which might happen. The King will, however, be able to decide better than any one else, as to the conduct we ought to observe in this affair, as in all others.

LETTER LXXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, July 3rd, 1707.

From the last post not having brought me any letter from you, Madam, I had no doubt of their having been given to the ambassador's courier, who arrived this morning; he delivered me that which you did me the honour of addressing to me on the 18th of June, and to which I shall reply before going to Atocha with their Catholic Majesties, who wished to pay their devotions to the Virgin, previous to their returning to the palace at Madrid, where the Queen is to have her confinement. M. Clement is very uncertain when this will take place, but he thinks it will be about the beginning of next month.

I know but too well that the King has not so many generals as he requires: this is not a trifling misfortune. The Duke d'Harcourt must think his health very bad, since he remains idle, at a time when he could be so usefully employed; I however, think him too honest a man to doubt that this is the only reason which prevents him from offering himself to his Majesty, for whatever appointment he may be thought worthy. The courtiers, who do not always render justice, will not perhaps judge with the same equity as I do.

The Queen has received a letter from her mother, sent through the Duchess of Burgundy, and which neither speaks ill or well of the health of his Royal Highness. The design of raising the huguenots would not very well accord with his devotion, as you justly observe. If M. de Vendome can force the enemy to decamp first, as he says he will do, this will be a grand blow.

It is very probable that the Marshal de Villars, by rendering the German Princes more terrified than ever, will oblige the Emperor and them to withdraw their troops from Italy, and that the Duke of Savoy, finding himself weakened thereby, will no longer be in a state to gratify his wish of entering France. In the state she is, the Queen will not go into regular mourning for Madame de Nemours, she will merely put on a coarser dress and some black ribbons, which she is not in the habit of wearing. This death, Ma-

dam, would create a number of animosities at your court, and these were not wanted. It appears to me to be a shocking thing to pass our lives in hating each other.

The Prince de Vaudemont is right in finding Marly delicious; if it were not so much so, as it is in itself, those who go there are enchanted by the hospitality and politeness with which the King receives them. The Prince seems highly gratified by the generosity of our two Kings; he never ceases to speak of it in his letters. I confess to you, Madam, that I was very glad to see the obliging manner with which their Catholic Majesties granted him the pension of thirty thousand crowns, when the ambassador informed them that the King advised them to do it, for I like to see great Princes animated by sentiments which are worthy of them.

It appears, then, that the Duchess of Burgundy is delighted with the whimsical adventures which have occurred to M. Clement and Madame de la Salle? When this nurse returns as well instructed as I shall take care she will be, I am much deceived if she does not give her grace an idea of certain things in this country, which will make her laugh more than once: I do not know, however, whether I am altogether right in interesting myself so much as I do for the Princess, who does all she can to kill herself: is it not likely, Madam, that she has taken it into her head to

go into the other world, in order to ascertain whether everything that passes here is known there? I scarcely know what to think of it: but it is certain that if I could be a witness of the contempt in which she holds her health, and of the chagrin she suffers when ill, which makes her see everything in so gloomy a light, she would turn the few brains I have, and kill me by degrees.

I am truly afflicted at their taking away any troops from the Duke de Noailles, who had so few already, and who does not fail to do so much with them; but I am, however, of your opinion, that the most important points must be attended to.

You have seen, Madam, by what I had the honour of telling you, the little importance I attached to the subject which induced M. Amelot to dispatch his courier, calculating but little on the person who made the propositions; although their Majesties did not think more favourably of them, it was nevertheless considered that they ought not to be absolutely despised.

I figured to myself the astonishment of Madame de la Motte, when the Duchess of Alba told her that the Prince of Asturias would be handsomer than the Duke of Brittany; and it is easier to conceive the impressive expression of her countenance, than to describe her conversation. The King of Spain honours her with his letters as often as he can, thinking that these marks of

his friendship may be capable of prolonging her days. His Catholic Majesty asks of the King how he is to conduct himself towards the Duke of Savoy, when the Queen has been brought to bed. Have the goodness, also, Madam, to say, how I am to act on my side, and whether it will not be sufficient for me to inform the Royal Duchess of the state of the Queen's health. I have had the honour of writing to them occasionally, since her Majesty's pregnancy, to give an account of its progress.

I have seen Trianon in all seasons; I often went to walk there while I was at Versailles, early in the morning and after dinner; I inhaled its perfumes, and admired all the beauties of the palace and the gardens with infinite pleasure; it is certainly an enchanting spot; and yet, Madam, you would prefer a cave to it, in order to obtain peace; but do you not know, that if you were in one for any time, no matter how short, you would be dead before you could hear the news. If you will listen to me, therefore, express no more wishes of this kind; look at all that is charming in that delightful retreat, and hope that you will see the war terminate honourably. Whatever favourable change there may be in Spain, there still remains enough of painful and alarming things to induce me to throw myself out of the window, if I were not a Christian, or of a disposition to convert everything into a source of horror. Would

to God, that you were the same! For you would be the happier from it; and I have nothing so much at heart as to see you exempt from your agitations, your happiness being as dear to me as my own.

LETTER XC.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 7th, 1707.

You are perfectly right, Madam, not to be fond of giving your letters to those gentlemen who have other matters to attend to, except being the bearer of them; for they make rounds which prevent me from receiving them as soon as I should by the ordinary couriers, or those which are despatched directly to Madrid.

M. de Villars, by holding a high tone in Germany, and continually advancing, makes the whole country tremble. I could wish, Madam, that he went still further, for there is but little appearance that the Princes whom he approaches will retire; and if they did, this general might act as he pleased in their own territories, as well as finding supplies both in their towns, palaces, and the country, it being impossible for them to carry

off all they possess. You will see, Madam, that if the Marshal continues his conquests, all those sovereigns will be obliged to recall their troops. Every body speaks of the little concert there is between the English and Dutch, and I have seen by some letters from M. de Vendome, that he is not afraid of being attacked, and that he expects the enemy will be found to decamp before him, for want of forage; so that it seems to me you are quite right in fearing more from the side of Savoy, than that of Flanders or Germany. I have already had the honour of informing you, that people do not like to see an officer who commands an army, so much afraid of his enemy: when this is the case, it is difficult for the soldiery to hope for victory, and I have heard it said, that confidence in the general tends not only to animate them, but redouble their valour. Why has Marshal de Tessé, who is brave, understands war, and is susceptible of honour, taken it into his head that the Duke of Savoy will enter France? I confess to you that this gives me much pain.

The Queen has received a letter to-day, informing her that the Duke of Savoy is cured of his fever, that the paroxysms were so mild that he got over them without being confined to his bed, and that nothing remains but a little debility: all the remainder of the letter seems to be very cheerful. This does not accord very well with the news which reaches us from every quarter,

[redacted]

stating that his Royal Highness is extremely ill; I do not pay too much attention to what his wife or mother says on this subject, since they would never risk the experiment of communicating a piece of news, either in France or Spain, which was likely to become dangerous. Grant that heaven may be pleased to touch the heart of this Prince!

Their Majesties have returned here amidst the acclamations of the people. The Queen was much pleased with her apartments, which are very cool; I showed them to M. Clement and Madame de la Salle this morning, and they did not appear dissatisfied with the pains I had taken, as well as the room destined to be the birth place of.....

LETTER XCI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 18th, 1707.

You will hear but little news from me to-day, Madam, because I received none of your letters by the last courier, and that there is nothing new here; we are waiting to hear of the capture of

Denia: the siege goes on more slowly than I could wish; it is the Chevalier d'Asfeld to whom the Marshal de Berwick has entrusted this service. The contributions which have been levied in the kingdoms of Valencia and Arragon are not paid, or at least, to a very small extent. The Duke of Orleans could not attack Lerida, because the artillery which he had been promised from France has not arrived; thus it happens, that the part performed by his Royal Highness, is not such as could be wished, either for himself or the King of Spain.

It was expected in this country, that after a great battle had been gained, time would not have been given to the enemy to breathe: yet, to speak with my usual sincerity, I must tell you, that all this goes on too slowly. I fear his Royal Highness is in despair, and that he sees but too clearly, that his evil fortune follows him everywhere. I am inclined to believe he has resolved to make himself master of Tortosa, which is a point of considerable importance, though it is less so than Lerida; but this enterprise cannot be attempted, before that against Lerida is completed, because the artillery employed against the last named place, is wanted. You see, Madam, I am not too well satisfied; my bad humour does not, however, go so far as to deprive me of the hopes that our affairs may assume a more favourable aspect in a short time.

The Marshal de Villars continues to conduct those of the King wonderfully well, striking greater terror into the heart of Germany every day, and drawing large sums for the supply of the army under his command, without mentioning what he is said to have sent to M. de Chamillard. I should like to have been present when this minister received it, in order to witness his satisfaction on the occasion. I yesterday heard, through a person who has a correspondence with Italy, that it is true the Duke of Savoy had a fit of the vapours, which continued nine or ten hours; that the Prince thought himself very ill, and that the Duchesses Royal were in great alarm; this fit has left him in a state of great exhaustion, although it is said some circumstances relative to the health of the Emperor have been communicated to the ambassador, which if true, would be of no trifling importance; I have no doubt of his giving an account of them to the King, or that the same persons who have written to him, have also addressed M. de Torcy on the subject.

When you intend to be bled, Madam, I entreat you will conceal it from me, for I am convinced nothing shortens life so much, whatever M. Fagon may say, and I am as anxious for the preservation of yours as my own. This is not a mere form of words; for I assure you, Madam, that I am not more affected by what regards myself, than I am in all that concerns you.

LETTER XCII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 25th, 1707.

The great heat which prevails here, Madam, incommodes the Queen very much, in preventing her from sleeping at night; but she tries to remedy this by resting a few hours in the mornings and afternoons: her looks are not the worse, nor M. Clement less tranquil, for he says it is very common for pregnant women not to sleep well during the two last months, and he suspects her Majesty is in her ninth. According to all appearances, the Duke of Orleans may be here by the time of the accouchement, if he wishes it, as his Royal Highness and Marshal de Berwick is going to place the army in quarters of refreshment, because it wants repose. This does not, however, arise from the fatigues it has undergone in sieges or other warlike exploits, having scarcely done any thing since its arrival in Arragon, of which you are no doubt aware, Madam; but it is the heat of the season and want of forage which has exhausted the troops. The ambassador, doubtless, gives an account of everything to the King, and you will allow me to avoid the pain of entering into details which do not belong to my

department. I shall have the honour of merely telling you, that I am greatly afflicted to see a Prince, who has the honour of being nephew to the King, full of valour and ambition, unable to satisfy them, and that his Royal Highness has not hitherto made the figure which he ought to have done on several accounts. The Chevalier d'Asfeld thought himself compelled to raise the siege of Denia, of which I had long entertained a bad opinion from its protracted state. This undertaking has been attended with inconceivable misfortune, as well as others, for which, I should, however, be consoled, if rebellion were put down in the kingdoms of Valencia and Arragon, and they were made to pay the contributions imposed upon them, because they would then be rendered incapable of doing us future mischief, and we should receive a present benefit. Marshal de Villars ought, on this occasion, to be an example for us to follow. You see that my natural cheerfulness does not prevent me from seeing our misfortunes, but at the same time I do not anticipate future calamities. We must endeavour to prevent them, by adopting better measures than heretofore.

We are informed that the succours destined for Italy will come to Catalonia, which does not alarm me at all, provided the most prudent and boldest measures are adopted. I will even go so far as to say, that it is perhaps better to take this resolution, than that of penetrating into Dauphiny or

Provence, because it will leave Marshal de Tessé more at his ease, and better able to make a stand against the Duke of Savoy. With respect to the reports about his bad health, it is very improbable, from what you write to me, since you say he is going to take the field. M. Amelot read to their Majesties and myself, the King's answer to him, respecting the persons who should wait upon the Queen, at the moment of her confinement. I am always exceedingly happy, when his Majesty approves of my suggestions, and the more so, since he is pleased to do me the honour of consenting to the Duchess of Burgundy appointing me her proxy, conjointly with the Duke of Orleans, to assist at the baptism of the expected infant. I accept this honourable office with all imaginable joy and respect. Their Catholic Majesties, immediately on receiving the letter from the King, their grandfather, on this subject, hastened loudly to announce this agreeable news, which caused me to receive the customary court compliments, as the usual tribute paid to persons who have the honour of occupying high stations near the royal family. I have not, however, presumed to take the liberty of making my most humble acknowledgments to the King for the honour thus conferred, nor to the Duchess of Burgundy, as I thought it better to wait till I heard from them. You will have the goodness, on this occasion, to do what is requisite, for I always fear being deficient in the customary

etiquette; and I have only this satisfaction, that I would not knowingly be guilty of any want of respect. As for you, Madam, you must be perfectly sensible how you have won my affections, which will only terminate with existence.

LETTER XCIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 31st, 1707.

I HAVE scarcely anything to say in reply to your last letter, dated from Saint Cyr, the 17th instant, in which you do me the honour of mentioning the uneasiness of the Duchess of Burgundy, in consequence of the illness of one of her brothers. The Duchess Royal has wrote to the Queen, to say that she thought it was the small-pox and that some livid spots had appeared since the abatement of the fever. It is very distressing, that our Princess and his Majesty should suffer in so many ways, owing to the natural goodness of their hearts as to family occurrences, and when their father adopts every mode of making them still more unhappy. Indeed, Madam, there is nothing more painful, and those who have the honour of being attached to them,

will be very difficult for his Royal Highness to succeed in his intention, and that if Marshal de Tessé advances in time, he may prevent it, and destroy the Duke of Savoy's army. The example of Charles V. who lost his army there, has not operated as a warning to this Prince, but God sometimes makes people repent of their temerity. I must, however, confess to you, that on this occasion I am not more sanguine than yourself, and that I shall feel great uneasiness till I see the result of the enterprize. It is not of late that I know the King is above mean revenge; the greatness of his mind soars above such things. The King of Spain cannot fail to follow his advice, and he will impart the news of the Queen's confinement to the Duke of Savoy. I shall have the honour of writing an account of her health to the Royal Duchesses, who will doubtless expect it with impatience, for they appear to me to have a great affection for their Majesties, and I am persuaded they would, instead of war, wish for the best understanding.

It is very astonishing that the German Princes should suffer themselves to be ruined by Marshal Villars, and not withdraw their troops from the league, which certainly shows great impolicy on their part, and already evinces the violent animosity which it entertains against the two crowns. This ought to strengthen their union still more; but that will depend upon the principal actors, who

ought only to have in view the glory of their sovereign which appears to me no easy task.

It is a long time since I mentioned the King of Spain to you, because I had nothing new to communicate; he continues to act well, is very attentive to business, and is much alive to the misfortunes of France as well as his own kingdom. I perceive, moreover, that he is hurt when he sees certain things done without his orders, or those which he gives are not executed agreeable to his wishes, and not at all forgiving the want of respect due to him. This Prince and the Queen certainly merit a happier fate than what they have hitherto experienced, and that the King, their grandfather, should uphold them in the station in which he has placed them. If it be possible that there are people who think otherwise, it appears to me that their hearts are as bad as their reasonings are false, for, Madam, the loss of Spain would be the ruin of France.

It must have been very stupid or malicious to carry the news to the lady of Marshal de La Motte, that the Duke de Berri was attacked with apoplexy, when there was no truth in it; and I should be very sorry to know who the person was, because I should have a very bad opinion of him or her. It were to be wished that the Duchess of Burgundy and this Prince, were not so careless about their health. The accident which has happened to the Duchess de Nevers is very strange,

and it would have been difficult for her to avoid such an incident: it must have interrupted the festivities of her daughter's marriage with the Duke d'Estrées. I am not at all surprised that the Cardinal forgot the notary, since, it is not the first of his absent fits. A few days ago, a report was circulated that the Queen was brought to bed of a prince, which caused so much joy, that the streets were filled with people running like madmen, and the square of the palace was filled in a moment. Her Majesty was obliged to appear in the balcony, to undeceive these good folks, who, notwithstanding the sight of her pregnancy, did not fail to call down blessings on the mother and child. When we shall have the happiness of realizing this event, I expect that it will diffuse general joy. Hitherto, the Queen has not had the least pain, which makes M. Clement very uncertain as to the time of her confinement. It appears to me, that at the present period, the news of the birth of a prince would be more necessary than ever; it would be a source of comfort for the King and for you, who have so much need of it, these are the reasons that make me desire it still more, being interested as I am in every thing which affects you.

LETTER XCV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 21st, 1707.

If I have complained that the Duke of Orleans has not obtained at the proper time the materials requisite for undertaking the siege of Lerida, it is because his Royal Highness had depended upon the promises which were given him, and the non-performance of which prevented him from adopting other measures. I am more reconciled as to the detachment of troops which have been asked of him, and which are already on their march for Provence, knowing perfectly well that the most important object for France and Spain, is to prevent the Duke of Savoy from obtaining a footing in that quarter, and obliging him, as soon as possible, to desist from his enterprize. It appears by the news from Toulon, that every preparation was made for a vigorous defence. Whilst writing this letter, I have received one from Marshal de Berwick, by an extraordinary courier, informing me that the King has ordered him to go into Provence as speedily as possible, and to embark for that object. He likewise desires me to say to the Queen, how sorry he is that he cannot pay his respects to her before his departure; but

that he will return during the ensuing winter. This is a great piece of news, however. Some days ago, it was reported very currently in Madrid, that the above general was going to where the King had ordered him; but we could scarcely believe it, because it was not announced from the court. The Duke of Orleans is now completely at liberty to act according to his own judgment, if it be true that his Royal Highness and M. de Berwick were not upon good terms. I cannot deny to you, but that it has been intimated in this country that this was the case, and I know not whether the report originates from their dependants, or whether there be any particular cause of strife, arising from emulation of glory between them. However it may be, neither knowing precisely the cause, nor the fact, I could not be induced to write to you about it, not doubting but it would have given you pain, and, moreover, caused you fresh embarrassment, for I look upon it, as so great a misfortune for sovereigns, that those who command, are not upon a better understanding, and I am so out of humour with persons who step in the way to magnify difficulties, in order to throw everything into confusion, that I almost banish as a wicked idea the suspicions that I might otherwise entertain. I cannot say that M. de Nancré has anything to do with the asserted misunderstanding between this Prince and the Marshal, at least his conversation would

induce one to believe quite the reverse; it would likewise be against his own interest; and as he possesses good sense, there is no probability of what is said of him in this respect being true. The ambassador, to whom I spoke about it yesterday, and who has frequent interviews with him, as he resides at his house, thinks as I do upon the subject. I have only known this Marquis since his coming to Spain, and therefore cannot form a correct opinion; besides, people more able than myself are often deceived in their opinions.

The Princess de Vaudemont is too good to value herself on account of the services I may have rendered her and her husband with his Majesty. My principal object was the service of the two kings, I knew very well that the number of enemies which the Prince has in the court here, only originated from the envy of his merit, and the station which he occupies. This I perceived since we were at Barcelona, and poor Marshal de Marsin, who did justice to the Prince de Vaudemont, had spoken of it several times to me. I shall continue most certainly to cultivate the friendship of the husband and wife, although it should only be from the novelty of finding the least mark of gratitude, as such sentiments are quite new to me in this country, for I protest to you, I have experienced frequently that the generality of the persons whom I have obliged, and who came to thank me, were no

sooner out of my sight, than they began to complain of me. This is not much calculated to give me a relish for interesting myself in behalf of others. I think you are no stranger to affairs of this nature, and we have only to continue pursuing a straight-forward course, after deploring the frailties of human nature. The Queen's time will probably be up at the end of the month, at which I am glad, because she will not be inconvenienced by the present excessive heat of the weather. Out of fifteen nurses which I sent for, notwithstanding my being opposed, because of their number and expence, we have now only two upon whom M. Clement depends; the fever having attacked a third, who was one of the best, and the others possess what is not necessary to constitute good nurses, which is very lamentable. I hope, however, that the two which I have just mentioned, will keep upon their legs, and that those who are not confined will serve as a reserve. In short, Madam, Clement confesses, that he should never have contemplated so many obstacles in this country in finding what is requisite. Let us beat the Duke of Savoy, all will go on well again, and also your health, which I really wish to be as good as my own, my affection for, and gratitude to you being inexpressible.

P.S. I receive letters very often from Madame de Caylus, filled with good sense, good breeding, and such feelings as she ought to possess towards

you. She informs me of her proceedings at Marly, and admires the King for his equanimity, and his gracious and polished manners, in the midst of so much embarrassment; she also relates wonders of the Duchess of Burgundy, and it appears to me she has a great affection for her. I read with great satisfaction everything she is pleased to write to me; but I do not give her a line in return, wishing to see whether my indifference will not disgust her, and whether she is as constant a friend as she is an agreeable correspondent. I entreat you to keep this a secret, and let her act as she thinks proper. The Marquis de Caylus, her brother-in-law, is a very worthy character, with whom his Catholic Majesty is extremely well satisfied. He is about quitting Madrid, to join his Royal Highness in Arragon, and I could wish that all the youth who may have the honour of paying their court to him were as prudent as he is.

LETTER XCVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid,—The Festival of Saint Louis, 1707.

At length, Madam, all my prophecies are fulfilled, we have the most beautiful Prince up

earth, and the Queen is doing well, though she suffered much pain previous to her confinement. It was a general remark that God had made us this present on the day of Saint Louis. I can say nothing more to you by this first courier. I do myself the honour of writing to the King and to the Duchess of Burgundy, but have not time for any more; I therefore beg you to make my excuses to the Royal Family, which will easily conceive how I am occupied at the present moment, and our eagerness to impart to it this agreeable news. I embrace you, Madam, a thousand times, and wish you as happy for many years as I am this day.

P.S. I entreat you to remember on this occasion the favour I begged of you for the Marquis de Brancas.

LETTER XCVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 4th, 1707.

The last letter which you did me the honour of writing to me, Madam, by the ordinary post, would have very much afflicted me, had you not taken care to desire the Duchess of Burgundy to *observe to* the Queen, that your letter was dated be-

fore the good news which arrived from Provence, for you seemed very much to fear lest affairs went ill in that quarter. As to Flanders, and Germany, although the enemy is in presence of our armies, it does not appear to me that there is the same fear of their doing us any more mischief; and I must confess to you, that almost the whole of my attention is occupied by Provence. If the Duke of Savoy loses as many men there as we are informed he does by desertion and sickness, and that Marshal de Tessé daily receives reinforcements, it appears as impossible that his Royal Highness should not be under the necessity of retreating, and that in so doing he may be attacked; for it is not enough to compel this Prince simply to withdraw, it would be desirable to destroy his army, to make him and his allies entirely abandon the hope of ruining France and conquering Spain. You may reply, perhaps, that it is easier to desire this, than put it into execution; but if it be true that we are superior in numbers, that the enemy experiences a scarcity of provisions, that he has been baffled before Toulon, it is probable that the Duke of Savoy will be much perplexed to regain Piedmont. The military men we have here, and who know the places by which his Royal Highness may pass, reckon that if the generals are on the alert, he will have cause to repent of having laid such bold plans; however, we shall know how it will be in time.

The Queen, Madam, and our Prince of Asturias, are daily becoming more healthy and beautiful. M. Clement, who says he has now nothing more to do, in seeing them so well, leaves us next Wednesday, satisfied, it appears to me, with their Majesties. It is impossible to be more so than we are with him; he is a worthy, honorable, skilful, modest, and polite man, full of zeal for our masters and mistresses, and in short, Madam, such as you have described him to me. I hope that we shall see him again, and that the Queen and the Duchess of Burgundy will, by adopting the proper measures, be able to send him to each other, so that he can attend them both. The nurse continues better; she appears humble, docile, and cheerful, and if she continues to be, as we think she is, she is admirable; all the lords regularly come to inquire after the health of the Queen and Prince, the latter of whom, I continue to show to the people before sun-set, there being no twilight at Madrid: these poor people are delighted, and deserve this consolation. You were perfectly right in saying that the Duchess of Burgundy's nurse was acquainted with life, and very clever; she has performed all the duties of her station in so delicate a manner, that her Majesty scarcely perceived she was there. In addition to these good qualities, she has greatly amused the Queen, and sometimes made the King laugh by her facetious conver-

sation. We shall keep her, with your permission, till the Queen is once more restored to her wonted health, in order to show the women who are intended to nurse the Prince, how they must perform that office so as to be able to do without her assistance.

M. de Nancré left us this morning to join his Royal Highness in Arragon, where I could wish there was more order, as well as in Valencia, so that more contributions might be levied than there are; but this has been owing to a misunderstanding, and not, I believe, from a want of good will among the people. As the Duke of Orleans is by himself, and perfectly his own master, all will depend upon him, and it will redound to his credit if he establishes good discipline in the two armies he commands, and sees that his commissaries do their duty. The Duke of Berwick wrote to me before his departure more obliging and friendly letters than ever, although it was said in Paris that we had quarrelled. Indeed, it requires a good share of patience not to be provoked at so many ridiculous stories, and the injury it does to those who are in office; nothing but our loyal and ardent attachment to our Kings can enable us to bear up against so many sources of uneasiness; mine are, however, much alleviated by the assurances you do me the honour of making, that you regard me as a friend who is perfectly devoted to you.

LETTER XCVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, Sept. 12th, 1707.

You did not expect what has happened, Madam, when the Duke of Savoy entered Provence, and you wrote to say that Marshal de Tessé trembled lest he should be unable to compel the Duke to raise the siege of Toulon, and precipitately abandon all his enterprizes: the result is highly creditable to the Marshal, and renders a great service to the state. This good news must certainly have caused great rejoicing, and I candidly own to you, that I entertained fears for an army whose commander so much dreaded his enemy; I am, therefore, very agreeably surprised that his Royal Highness was obliged to raise the siege. Besides the great interest I take on several accounts in the welfare of France and Spain, I feel a pleasure on M. de Tessé's account, who, you know, is not an object of indifference to me since the visit I received from him at Toulouse. We flatter ourselves that the Duke of Savoy will meet with other obstacles before he returns home, since he was followed up so closely, and there were troops in every quarter to intercept him. What a pleasing event it would be to make him a prisoner,

and escort him to the Duchess of Burgundy! I am persuaded that at the sight of her and the King, he would change his sentiments, and be sorry to entertain those which occupy his mind at present; and as a father, how could he resist the persuasions of so lovely a daughter as our great Princess, not to mention the insinuating manners of a King, who requires only to be known, to be respected and loved. The feelings of the Queen would also be highly gratified if such an event took place, and her health, as well as that of the infant, would be improved, for there never was one more calculated for life than the latter: he is, indeed, already fine company for her Majesty, and there is not a prettier sight than to see him in the arms of so lovely a mother. From what you tell me of the Duke of Brittany, I see clearly that a wager might be laid on these two cousins; but I am not quite sure whether you and I shall agree upon this point. I had the honour of writing a line on it to the Duchess of Burgundy, to whom I thought it my duty to give an account of the Queen and Prince of Asturias. Should my letters have found her in good humour, she will doubtless say, from all the insipid silly things I have put on paper, that joy has turned my brain; but if, unfortunately, she should be in one of those gloomy and desponding fits which so often attack her, she will think my letters tiresome, as well as insipid and silly. Howe

it may be, I cannot help being cheerful at present.

The Duke of Orleans yesterday sent Count de Sassenage to compliment their Majesties upon the birth of the Prince, and he brought me a very civil letter from his Royal Highness. Marshal de Berwick wrote to me also in a similar style, before his departure for Arragon, and our mutual good understanding has not experienced a moment's interruption. Their Majestics have just made him a handsome present, at which I am much pleased. The ambassador and myself had the honour of suggesting it to them, and they acceded on our recommendation in a most gracious manner; it is an estate in the kingdom of Valencia, yielding a tolerable large income, which has been made a duchy, with the title of grandee attached to it; this title will descend to the Marshal's second son if he wishes it, and to his descendants for ever; it is called the duchy of Liria. You may judge from this circumstance, of the foundation for all the mischievous and ill natured reports that have been circulated, the propagators of which are, however, often more easily believed than others; nor are they usually more unacceptable for this propensity in courts. Happy are those who can pass a sweet and tranquil life in retirement by their own fire-side, which is a remark that this subject naturally suggests. The detachment from Arragon, which the

King had ordered into Provence, and which Lord Berwick brings us, will be a great reinforcement for the Duke of Orleans, and it would be a grand point if his Royal Highness could capture the places he wishes to attack: he was two hours too late in falling upon the enemy's cavalry, which caused the failure of a well laid and well projected plan, had he had time for its complete execution: he was not born under a fortunate planet. I had the honour of writing to the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy since the Queen's confinement, and as it was conjectured that they were then on their way to Toulon, my letters were addressed to the Marshal de Tessé, which will, consequently, retard their reaching the Duke's hands. I beg you to inform them of the cause, for I could not wish these Princes to reproach me with a want of respect on the occasion of the Queen's happy confinement, which must have given them so much pleasure. I suppose you are now at Fontainebleau, where I wish you to enjoy yourself; but as it appears to me you have often been indisposed there, I should prefer hearing that your were in you room at Marly, notwithstanding all your currents of air, for they are insupportable at this season, especially if it is as hot in France as here. I wish you better, Madam, than you wish yourself.

P.S. Contrary to her usual prudence, the Queen has given way to her feelings, by writing to the

Duchess of Burgundy and her mother; and I have just found her finishing her two letters. This is the first fault I have remarked in her Majesty, which I had promised to inform you of.

LETTER XCIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 18th, 1707.

YOUR answer, Madam, respecting the Queen's confinement, only came to hand yesterday, informing me of the rejoicings at court in consequence of the birth of the Prince of Asturias, which, although I had no doubt of, has not failed to give me great pleasure, for I like you to take an interest in everything which concerns their Majesties, who are not less your children than those whom you see every day. The Duke of Alba has given a very good account to his Catholic Majesty of the joy which he witnessed in all the royal family, by beginning with the King, and so on with the other branches; he does not omit one circumstance, at which the Queen is very much affected, and which is, that when he announced to the King that he was a grandfather, his Majesty immediately inquired after the Queen's health; and you cannot conceive what an impression this question

coming from the heart, made upon her mind. You are not the only person, Madam, who have given me an account of the excessive joy of the Duke and Duchess of Alba, as several others have reached me of their conduct on this occasion, stating that they threw everything out of the windows, and did not think they could sufficiently testify their joy at so happy an event; M. de Torcy has furnished me with a long account of it. The affair of Provence is nearly finished, although there is no end to your anxiety; at which I am not astonished, because you have for a long time told me that you never enjoyed any good fortune, without the fear of experiencing some reverse which may perhaps never happen. This is what may be called, without meaning to offend you, creating monsters, in order to fight them. That which I find the most formidable, is the want of money, which is, I confess, very scarce in Spain as well as in France. It is, however, said that it might be found, and that it would not be withheld, as it is, if public credit were not absolutely extinct; and M. de Chamillard's enemies, who are only too numerous in Paris and the armies, impute the blame to him. I pity him much for having been obliged to manage the finances at a period when those of Crœsus would scarcely suffice. I think you much more accommodating than myself, being resolved to live with the mad, the ungrateful, and the wicked, of which you say

courts are full; they have almost become ir
ferable to me, and I very often feel an inclin
to retire from all intercourse with the worl
order to avoid having any with such people,
begin to fear becoming of an irritable disposi
What, then, is this rage which continues to
pains to make it be believed that Marshal de
wick and myself have quarrelled, when not
can be more false? I have a mind to send you, o
these days, letters, which I receive from him, f
civility and friendship, in order that you ma
them read to those persons who tell you, w
mysterious air, that we cannot abide each o
and if you added, the being as ignorant as
are, with respect to what is passing in Spain,
will not be at all curious in future for them t
you news of this country, though it might pro
happen, that they would discontinue playing
a game, and spare you the chagrin of apprehe
things which are disagreeable to you, for
persuaded, from all that you have written to
that our divisions here must have given you
siness. Lord Berwick has written to me from
gossa, and assured me that he shall be nea
Duke of Orleans in a few days.

I am impatient to know whether his
Highness is recovered from the fever, as it att
him very unseasonably, just as the siege of
was about to commence, which I could wis
captured, as it is a very strong and imp

place, and able to hold out for some time. Many people, who pique themselves upon a knowledge of military affairs, thought that the siege of Tortosa should have been begun first; the event will show whether they were wrong or right. M. de Nancré has then more interest than any one, in wishing that his Prince may always adopt the best measures, since he will have to answer for what his master does; which situation I do not envy him, knowing that his Royal Highness has hitherto been under the influence of an unlucky planet. I agree that it is a high honour to be near the great, but it is dearly purchased, Madam, when they are beloved as we love them, and when their interests make us forget our own. When the heart is affected, all these solid reasons vanish into air. I leave my closet almost disposed to throw myself out of the window at viewing such insupportable troubles; I go into the Queen's chamber, where I often find the King in as great affliction as she is, and justly troubled about many things; I endeavour to dissipate their chagrin; by degrees the conversation becomes cheerful; we laugh and remark that we must hope for the best, and I absolutely forget all the past. Such is the conclusion of my letter, and as I have explained it to you; therefore, knowing from my own feelings that it is not impossible to subdue one's melancholy, it would be my duty to scold you most *respectfully*; but since you have been

three weeks without the fever, I prefer congratulating you on it, to amusing myself with reproaches, when, perhaps, you are incorrigible. I shall therefore to-day adopt a mild tone with you, but for which you will not perhaps be more obliged to me.

LETTER C.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 26th, 1707.

You appear to me, Madam, a little less grieved in your last letter, than in those which you did me the honour of writing to me before the Duke of Savoy had retreated from Provence. God be praised for it! you see that he sometimes gives us consolation when we most fear our misfortunes will thicken upon us, and that, therefore, it is better not to anticipate evils. Be pleased to excuse me for this slight reproof, and I will excuse you many other things, for you will not fail in general to give me opportunities. Should you persist in thinking that the name of Louis, which is given to the Prince of Asturias, will offend the good and loyal subjects of the King of Spain, ought not what I have said to convince you of the contrary. Were the joyful emotions with which the people

called this Prince the object of their desires, *Luisillo*, feigned when I showed him to them from a balcony of the palace? Did not their accompanying blessings upon their Majestics, *sus padres*, *sus abuelos*, come from the heart? Why, then, start a difficulty, where none exists? Those who have insinuated that this name would not please the nation, because it is, as you say, too frenchified, are as much the enemies of France, as they are of the Catholic King, and even the Spaniards themselves: they are real Austrians, as such ideas can only have been suggested by the direct or indirect partisans of the house of Austria. All the evils we suffer originate from the admiral and some other grandees, making the enemy believe that the subjects of Philip the Fifth would revolt on their approach, and if his Majesty had made a signal example of some one, the league would soon have been undeceived, for the more harm we give them to understand they can do, the bolder they become. Their temerity cannot be better repressed than by letting them know that they are not in the least formidable, and this is the only way to discredit them in the opinion of the enemy. Any other steps will prove illusory. They flatter themselves with being able to apply to your court, and obtaining every kind of employ through the King's protection, which is indeed the case. They evince their gratitude for it only by propagating that their King is

nothing but a shadow of royalty, and that it is Louis XIV. who, in reality, governs this monarchy. Judge, Madam, what dependence can be placed on these gentlemen.

Do for us, at Versailles, as we do for you; for whatever may happen to us, either through the war or any other cause, we maintain at Madrid, that it is not your fault, and we contend for your infallibility much more than for that of the Pope, although we meet with people whom we find it difficult to undeceive in their prejudices. All this long dissertation might be contained in a few words; viz. only listen to us, and believe only us. This is what the King promised the ambassador and myself in your presence, and which you had the goodness of confirming to me should be done, for which I summons you on your word.

I have the honour of sending you the answer of M. Amelot, who was greatly affected at the interest which you have taken in his misfortune; he feels it sensibly but like a Christian. I have represented to him the extreme displeasure of M. de Tonnere, and the whole house, in order, if possible, to avert the ruin of an inexperienced youth, and who is, as he says, in despair, at having killed his best friend. I am not without hopes but he will reflect upon it, when he shall have surmounted so reasonable and cruel a grief, for he possesses much good sense and Christian feeling. I have also had my share of the misfor-

tunes of this life, poor Count d'Egmont, having died some days ago, and he being the last of his family. His valour and probity caused him to be esteemed and loved. He received seven wounds at the battle of Ramillies, of which he was cured with difficulty, and he died of sickness at Fraga, caused by having gone out wherever his duty called him, and being exposed to a burning sun. He loved me as a mother, and the Countess d'Egmont looks upon me in the same light. He thought he had no reason to be satisfied with the little respect that was paid to him in France, but his complaints did not divest him of that which he owed to the King; therefore they do not prevent me from regretting him very much, and I sincerely pity his wife. It is too painful a task to speak to you of the dead, I will therefore talk of the living. The Duke of Orleans, who honours me with many civilities, has been pleased to confide to me his wishes for procuring a kind of distinction for a lady who has not been indifferent to him, and who you will easily conceive is Mademoiselle de Seri. His Royal Highness, finding himself very much embarrassed to accomplish his object, has imagined that the simple title of dame d'atour to the Queen of Spain, without any salary, would suit, because she would then drop the name which she bears in his service, and of which it behoves in some measure the generosity of this Prince to rid her, by getting

her advanced to a little more honourable rank. He would much wish to be under the obligation to you, of persuading the King not to disapprove his views, for the consent of his Majesty is sufficient to obtain this favour from the King and Queen of Spain for M. d'Orleans, who deserves much more considerable favours,and their Majesties would be delighted to gratify him in this trifle: it would be attended with no bad consequence whatever, but, on the contrary, there is not a Castilian but would praise them for it, and who would not do as much in the King's place; besides, Madam, there is nothing new in this proceeding, and, therefore, I flatter myself with a favourable answer on the subject, for which I shall be very much obliged to you.

LETTER CI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 2d, 1707.

I wish this letter may find you in as good health at .Fontainebleau, as that which you enjoyed when you did me the honour of informing me of your arrival there. The fogs from the waters and the woods in that place, are so much against the rheumatic pains which torment you, that I

always fear for you; and but for them, I do not know whether I should not envy you the pleasure which such a delightful spot ought in other respects to afford you. It is true, that I should enjoy its agreeable walks more than you can, because I am passionately fond of that exercise, especially in the forests, whose solitude much pleases me. I remember your writing to say that you made no great account of fine houses or fine gardens; I differ from your taste, in that respect, for I like them very much, but I would not, however, wish to remain there long alone, for although there was ever so little good society, I should prefer this life to any other. Thus neither you nor I have what we could wish for. The Duchess of Burgundy is then quite overjoyed at riding on horseback! I think that the Princess of England is but little less at ease than she is, not having yet left Saint Germain's; for Fontainbleauis a fine introduction for a young person, since the court only goes there to amuse itself, and it is more crowded than at Versailles, where there is a perpetual bustle in going and coming from Marly and Paris. These two great Princesses ought, it appears to me, to agree very well together, being two such lovely women. The tall form of the English Princess, and her noble air, gave me pleasure when I had the honour of seeing her at Saint Germain's. I told the Queen, her mother, that I doubted not, when she was more grown, but her face would

become much handsomer, and fuller, and her complexion clearer. I do not know whether it is the respectful attachment which I have entertained for this Princess so long, and the affability with which she honours me, that makes me love her, or whether it is because I was beside her majesty's bed when she was born, but it is certain that I am delighted when I hear her well spoken of; I could wish to see her one day Duchess of Berri, and the King, her brother, in sound health. That of our little Prince is extremely good, and his nurse gives great satisfaction; nevertheless I cannot help trembling, when I reflect, that if she is attacked by the fever, we should be obliged to change her for one of the three which we had kept and who have been lately confined; there is only one remaining, the two others having fallen sick. There are so many sick people in Madrid that the president of Castile told me the day before yesterday, that the viatica had been carried in one parish only, to six thousand persons. If the same thing had happened in any other Spanish city, it would have been deemed contagious, but they are so infatuated at Madrid, that they make no account of all sorts of misfortunes, provided they live here. Nevertheless, judging of it in an unprejudiced manner, it is one of the most disagreeable places on earth; the filth and effluvia being insupportable, exposed almost continually to high winds, which blow with a piercing cold during the winter, or

which cause perspiration in the summer, and the air gives rise to hectic diseases, which carry off numbers. You will own that such a place of abode is not enviable, to which must be added, that none of the necessary conveniences of life are to be found here, and that the few we have, bring their weight in gold. As the Queen writes to you herself about her own concerns, I have no occasion to notice them. Her Majesty will receive all the ladies the day after to-morrow, and the foreign ministers will afterwards pay their respects to her. Their Majesties will go to Atocha in public on Thursday, and everything is preparing for this solemn ceremony, as well as possible in the present state of things: it has not taken place for the last forty-six years. We have detained Madame de la Salle, that she might see everything worth seeing here, in order that she may give a description of it to the Duchess of Burgundy and yourself. I think that she is satisfied with their Majesties, and she deserves the kindnesses which they have shown her, having well discharged her duty, both to the Queen and Prince; and so has M. Clement. He will doubtless have had the honour of seeing you before this letter reaches Paris, and must have shown you a present made to him by Cardinal de Portocarera, which was done in so handsome a manner as greatly to enhance the obligation. The Cardinal often comes to the palace, and I have for a long time done my

utmost to bring him here, as he is persuaded tha
he is under some obligation to me for procurin
the Countess of Parma's return from exile, wit
her husband, both of whom were banished int
Biscay. It is, indeed, so far true, that I had th
honour of representing to the King, in presence o
the president of Castile, and the ambassador, tha
I thought it would be a means of laying the Ca
dinal under still greater obligations, as being th
Count's uncle, that the Countess should not be le
in disgrace, which the President judged should b
the case, knowing as he did, the mischief she ha
done by her dangerous intrigues, and her bo
and insidious conversations. God grant his Ma
jesty's clemency may not produce fresh evi
although it may have been very discreetly exe
cised! It does not appear up to the present tim
that any of those whom his Majesty has pardoned
repent of their disloyalty, which is very extraor
dinary; however, we should be astonished a
nothing, though we cannot help being so occa
sionally. We expect every moment to hear o
the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, but as for Lerida
that will be protracted, at which I am muc
grieved. You are right in observing that th
want of money is the greatest enemy we have
The ambassador is but too well aware of it, sinc
he has to pay the French and Spanish troop
We are exposed to many embarrassments:
have none to prevent me from thinking of all th

obligations, I am under to you, and which will last as long as I live.

P.S. I have received a sensible letter from my lovely friend, breathing sentiments of affection for you: she informs me that she prolonged her stay with you as long as possible, before she returned to Paris. I shall not be perfectly satisfied with you, till you own to me, that she is the prettiest woman, and one of the most desirable acquaintances you know.

LETTER CII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 10th, 1707.

Although I am well pleased with your letter of the 26th ultimo, from Fontainebleau, as it is longer and a little more cheerful than usual, I shall only answer it briefly to-day, because I have had several other engagements of a different nature, and you have ordered me to act as I feel disposed, or have time, with respect to you, which I do the more willingly, since I sometimes trespass upon your patience by my long letters; but I confess that it eases my mind to unbosom myself to you, and relieves me from my fatigues, which

it would be very difficult to sustain without this source of consolation. You tell me that it is now for us who are in Spain to be happy, and we endeavour to be so, since the Marquis de Bay has just captured Ciudad Rodrigo, which surrendered at discretion, with a garrison of fifteen hundred Portuguese, and nearly three hundred officers, and a large quantity of ammunition, and some artillery. This capture was achieved with the greatest possible vigour by the Spanish and French infantry, whose courage was highly conspicuous: they were commanded on the day of the attack by the young Count d'Aguilar, who has the honour of being known to you, and who is highly spoken of for his conduct in this action. M. de Bay, is fortunate in his undertakings, having succeeded hitherto in all of them, which causes him to be loved and esteemed by the troops under his command. Since this conquest, the Portuguese have evacuated another small place, in which they had two battalions. In consequence of these events, Castile is no longer exposed to their incursions, and it is a province that certainly deserves to be preserved. The Duke of Orleans is highly satisfied with the progress he is making at Lerida, and wrote yesterday to say, he hoped shortly to be master of the town, but as to the castle, it will be more difficult to take, if he besieges it; for it appears from what Marshal de Berwick has communicated to me,

that he is still uncertain as to what he should do; but his Royal Highness speaks more confidently of it to his Majesty.

I hope that when it becomes necessary to come to a decision, there will be no difference of opinion between this Prince and the Marshal, since both have only the good of the service in view, which you are aware is the most desirable thing, and more especially, in such a war as this, when the least mistake might do so much mischief. I heard with pleasure, that the King had sent some fresh regiments to the Duke de Noailles, which he will know how to employ to the purpose; the diversion he will thus be enabled to make, cannot fail to be highly useful, and very embarrassing to the Archduke. You may perceive from all this, that our affairs do not proceed amiss in Spain. If the news of raising the siege of Gaeta is confirmed, of which there is every probability, however small may be the number of troops sent into that quarter, the Neapolitans, who are very much divided among themselves, would be easily able to shake off the German yoke and sue for pardon to their legitimate sovereign, whose clemency and generosity they have already so much experienced; this would form a fine contrast with the conduct of others, and might contribute to a glorious peace. I think, that the Duke of Savoy, has reason to * * *

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might easily find himself embarrassed, and that the Prince de Vaudemont is right, when he assures you, that the Germans will, in future, distrust his Royal Highness. Marshal de Villars has all the appearance of reducing to reason those who are within his reach, for he certainly discharges his duty well. If all the other generals could subsist their armies as he does his, without its costing the King anything, M. Chamillard would adore them, and I should not despair, that if he, no longer feeling the want of money, should send enough to pay the French troops in Spain. He has written me a facetious letter, in which he very humorously gives a rap on the knuckles to M. de Pontchartrain, whom he knows I esteem, and I must be a most generous woman to pardon him; but it is impossible to be angry, with a minister when he appears to be in good temper, since it is the surest sign of his being dissatisfied. I have nothing more to add till next week, and I beg you, in the mean time, to take better care of your health than the Duchess of Burgundy does, and to believe I am unable to express my respect and attachment for you.

LETTER CIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 12th, 1707.

The chancellor has written to the ambassador, to inform him that the King had, at the instance of the Countess de Tonnere, ordered him to suspend the decision upon the proceedings against her son, till an answer arrived from M. Amelot; at which the latter appeared to be much affected, because, he says, that his Majesty had promised Madame de Vaubecourt and her son, that he should allow justice to take its course, of which I thought it right to inform you. I do not know what he will write respecting it to the court; but the fact is, that he and Madame de Tonnere are much to be pitied, the former having lost a very amiable son, and the latter, fearing the loss of her son's reputation, in consequence of a public proceeding. I think that if the King, before giving this order, had been pleased to cause it to be intimated to the ambassador, that it would give him pleasure to sacrifice his just resentment, he would have done so more readily than at present, when it is generally known that his Majesty expects it from him, since this will

be understood as a command, and which greatly mortifies him. I have on this occasion acted as a true friend and good relative to Madame de Tonnere, who, believing me to be such, has addressed herself to me, entreating me to ask for her son's pardon, in the most handsome and affecting manner that she could; and I have forthwith set about it in the best manner I was able. I own that I could wish this disastrous affair to be buried in oblivion, and I have not succeeded in it to my satisfaction, M. Amelot asserting that he is obliged to act as he does, both in honour and conscience. I should be a less rigid casuist on the score of honour; but I leave the decision of it to you, and shall only repeat, that a father overwhelmed with grief, is in a very distressing dilemma as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt in such circumstances. I hope the weather is as fine at Fontainebleau as it is at Madrid, for here rain is much wished for, as it is believed it would terminate the sickness that prevails, which is a proof that we are never satisfied; but be so, I entreat you, Madam, with my sentiments of affection towards you, which are in proportion to your deserts.

P.S. As I was about to seal my packet, I received a letter from Marshal de Berwick, a copy of which I enclose you, that you may see what is his opinion of the city and castle of Lerida. No person can be more attentive than

he is, in informing me of everything that is going on. The Duke of Orleans, also, does me the honour of writing to me, both which correspondences should satisfy you whether we were upon unfriendly terms.

"Camp before Lerida, October 8th, 1707.

"To-morrow, Madam, our batteries will open upon the town, and I hope that in a few days we shall be masters of it; after that, the castle remains, which I think will be a very difficult conquest, but when we shall have possessed ourselves of the former, we shall be able to reconnoitre it more closely, and see whether it is a practicable enterprize with the slender means in our power, at such an advanced period of the season, and especially in case the enemy should receive large reinforcements.

"I beg you to have the goodness to present my humble duty to their Majesties, and to believe me, with all imaginable respect and sincerity, Madam, your very humble and obedient servant,

"The Marshal Duke De Berwick."

LETTER CIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 17th, 1707.

The Duke of Orleans begins to be fortunate, having just captured the town of Lerida, and hoping to be equally successful as to the citadel: he had very few killed and wounded, and writes to the King of Spain to say that he does not hear of its being likely that the enemy will be reinforced. His Royal Highness adds, that after the capture of the citadel, he shall endeavour to render himself master of Tortoso, and in case of success, he will then pay his respects to their Majesties at Madrid. We shall be very glad on every account at his returning crowned with so much glory. There is every probability that the Archduke, also, pressed hard by the Duke de Noailles, and abandoned by his allies, will be compelled to quit Catalonia; and if this should happen, why should not some troops be sent towards Naples, where they are very much dissatisfied with the German government? It appears to me, that this kingdom should not be neglected, which it is asserted presents no great obstacle; and with Sicily, which is ours, we should have the means of concluding an honourable and lasting peace.

An action lately took place in the kingdom of Valencia, to the advantage of his Majesty's arms. Five or six hundred of his troops, commanded by the lieutenant colonel of the regiment of Mahony (a good subject of the King of England,) and a good officer, whom you have done me the honour of recommending to me, have defeated three thousand men, a third of whom, were from the garrison of Denia, the greatest part English, or Spanish rebels, and the remainder miquelets, who wished to besiege Pego: more than a thousand were killed. This defeat, besides having the effect of weakening the enemy, will operate favourably on these mischievous people, who cannot be mastered but through fear: thus, Madam, we have the happiness to see everything prospering, and God grant a continuance of his mercies!

I am delighted with an answer which the Duke of Burgundy has been pleased to send me, for it is equally sensible, kind, and polite. If I could presume so far, I would very humbly entreat the Duchess of Burgundy, to have the goodness to express to him my gratitude, as this Prince would doubtless receive my compliments with more pleasure from her mouth than by my hand.

LETTER CV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 23rd, 1707.

The King of Spain appeared to me very glad at your being satisfied with his letter, and he impatiently waits your reply; for I can assure you, Madam, that I have heard his Majesty frequently say, since you reproached him with the idea that he had forgotten you, that you would be much to blame to doubt his esteem and friendship. This Prince only requires to be known for his great qualities, for he is certainly deficient in none of those which create love and esteem, and if he has any fault, it is that of being too diffident of himself. I hope that time will correct this defect, since he possessed it in a greater degree formerly.

We have heard that the whole of the naval expedition had repassed the straits to return to England, except nine or ten ships of war left at Gibraltar, which are perhaps intended to receive the Archduke, in case he is obliged to quit Catalonia, which would probably happen, if the Duke of Orleans shortly takes the castle of Lerida, which it is thought will not be so difficult a task as was at first imagined. From your answer

respecting the wishes of his Royal Highness, I have not a single word to say in reply, and shall, therefore, be respectfully silent, as an atonement for the only fault which you have found in me, and which will deserve to be effaced from your memory, by my submission to the King's will. Many persons who had the honour of seeing him at Fontainebleau, told me they left him in perfect health, and with as serene a countenance as if his Majesty had nothing to do but to amuse himself. Indeed, Madam, this intellectual superiority and equanimity are very extraordinary, and worthy of admiration. No person is more interested than myself in his happiness and glory, and I cannot entertain these sentiments, without being entirely devoted to you.

LETTER CVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 7th, 1707.

I HAD not the honour of writing to you last week, in consequence of having the fever, which had attacked me some days before, and continued for five days, but without any alarming symptoms; I was my own physician, and have recovered; it may possibly return again, for it is

common this year to every one who has been sick to have several relapses. At all events, I observe a regimen, which the royal house of France could hardly sustain were its members in my position. If it is necessary that you, or I should have the fever, it would be much better for me to be attacked by it, because it does not make me more melancholy, and you appear more cheerful when you are well. I assure you, that few things can give me greater pleasure than to hear you are a little more tranquil, which will not be our case till we learn that the castle of Lerida is taken, which the engineers assert cannot hold out long, as it will be a capture very glorious to the Duke of Orleans, and extremely advantageous to the King of Spain. It is become absolutely necessary to us, in order to get completely rid of the enemy in this country, since we have had the misfortune to lose Italy, and the King is not in a condition to aid his Majesty to re-enter that country. The Duke d'Uceda, Cardinals del Giudice, de la Tremoille, and Aquaviva, who know everything that is passing at Naples, all write to us, as well as several Italians, that nothing would be easier than to reduce this kingdom to its duty. I cannot think of the misfortune which has caused the loss of Milan, and which has been followed by the other losses, without extreme grief, and I greatly pity the lot of the good subjects of his Catholic

Majesty. Some great Neapolitan lords have shown their zeal and loyalty in so noble and striking a manner, that they cannot indeed be sufficiently rewarded. One of them, the Duke de Popoli, who is captain of the guards, is a subject of real worth, who loves the King's person, and counts as nothing all that he has lost, in comparison with his duty. Meantime, Madam, he has none of his family left with him; two of his daughters are in the hands of the enemy, his brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, and mother-in law, for whom he has a great affection, are exposed to all the brutalities which the new viceroy is capable of exercising against them. To increase his troubles, the poor Duchess of Popoli has been four months in this palace, nearly in a dying state, and the Duke, his son, and all his servants are sick. It would be a great pity were the Duchess of Popoli to die, being a very fine, prudent, and sensible woman, and a favourite of the Queen. Do you much approve the etiquette which prevents the *camerara mayor* from visiting this afflicted Duchess, living, as they do, under the same roof? Call to mind, I entreat you, the two individuals, of whom it has always been attempted to render the King suspicious, and whom I always defended, Cardinal Aquaviva and the Duke de Jovenarro; about the former of whom, I have had the honour to write to you, and whose brother serves at present in his Majest-

guards at Lerida; the Marquis of Aquaviva, his nephew, the eldest of his family, commands a regiment in Flanders, where he is esteemed by all worthy people; his father, the Duke d'Atri, defended Pescara to the last extremity, and capitulated only upon honourable terms; all their wives, or nearest female relations, were to withdraw into the ecclesiastical states, where perhaps they are already. The Cardinal also loses all the ecclesiastical benefices he enjoyed in Naples, and declares loudly for the King his master, in the heart of Rome itself, where the German faction now gives the law. Cardinal del Giudice exerts himself to the utmost, in concert with the Duke d'Uceda, and Cardinal de la Tremoille. The Prince de Celamare, son of the Duke de Jovenarro, and the Duke de Bisaccio, his nephew, have followed the Marquis de Villena, to shut themselves up in Gaeta, and their wives have also retired, leaving everything they possessed. Such are the two traitors, whom the French ambassadors, formerly at Madrid, reproach me with having for friends, and the court often received letters, complaining against me for sparing them. I ingenuously confess, that such recollections call to mind more recent things, and I am often tempted to form an intimate friendship with grandees, who are represented to you quite different from what they are, and which makes you esteem them. Nothing would be easier, if

I chose, than to join a considerable number of these gentlemen, and to act in concert with them. They are the same that I have endeavoured to render such as they ought to be for our two Kings. I then received severe reproofs for it from your court, which now entertains a good opinion of these same persons, for which reason if you will give me permission, I will recommence my former experiments, and leave the issue to God. You will, perhaps, think me rather mischievous; no matter, I wish to appear to you in my real character, and to habituate you, if it is possible, to my faults, for I know that I have some of which it will be very difficult to correct myself. Our Prince of Asturias is very well, and begins to laugh, and look a perfect beauty; his nurse gives excellent milk, but we have nevertheless sent for four of the others to return, in order not to be at a loss, in case any misfortune happen to her.

I think that M. d'Aubigny, whom the Queen has sent to Paris, will have had the honour of seeing you, and that he will have told you many things which cannot be communicated by letter, and which it is, perhaps, right you should know.

Forty-five thousand francs will be immediately sent to the Duke of Alba, to indemnify him, in some measure, for the expences which he has put himself to in the display of magnificence, against the precise order of the King his master;

his Majesty having recommended to him to confine himself to what would be indispensably necessary for the celebration of the birth of the Prince of Asturias, and to follow in that respect the example of the King his grandfather, who thus acted with his ambassadors when the Duke of Britanny was born. I do not know whether the King has habituated his ministers to receiving money for lavish expenditures, when they have taken place contrary to his orders. Money is so often wanted to pay the troops, that no imprudent use should be made of it; and I believe you must have been of the same opinion, which I shall impart to the Duke of Alba, as I do to you; but I will serve him on every occasion to the utmost of my power. The ambassador is ready to accede to the King's wishes, in what concerns the death of his son, and repeated it again to me yesterday evening, in terms which evinced his submission to, and desire to please his Majesty. He is very much obliged to you for the interest you feel in his misfortune, which appeared to me to have given him some relief. He has just sent to me to say, that he does not think of visiting the palace to-day, because he had the fever all night. I do not know what we should do, if M. Amelot were unable to officiate any longer; he has sent me two letters from Lerida, one from his Royal Highness, and the other from the Duke de Berwick, *which* have afforded me much gratification, by

informing me that the siege goes on well, and that the covered way has been taken. M. de Berwick says, that he begins to think they shall soon be masters of the place, and that the enemy's army, which has made its appearance, and over a part of which, a partisan has obtained some success, is composed only of nineteen battalions and seventy squadrons; he had always so bad an opinion of this enterprize, that I rely much upon what he says. The Duke d'Ossuna has sent a courier from Andalusia to his Catholic Majesty, bringing excellent news, if it should prove true: it states, that twelve French ships have attacked the English fleet, composed of five ships of the line and sixty transports that were on their way to Portugal with provisions, of which that kingdom was in great need; they had also a thousand horses and six hundred infantry on board, and it is asserted, that these five men of war have been taken or burnt, with many others. My friend, M. de Pontchartrain, will perhaps have been informed of this action before the news of it arrived here, although M. de Chamillard wrote to me sometime ago, as if he had not been aware of it; but your friend, M. de Pontchartrain, who is better informed about land than maritime affairs, will doubtless, have intimated to you . . . (I forget what.) You will own that this is a fine slip of the pen, but I prefer the minister's, trifling in this manner, to his assuming a lamentable air,

which alarms me dreadfully. I hope, in future, to find nothing but cheerfulness in your letters, and that your health will constantly improve, which I wish for as much as it is possible for one who is entirely devoted to you, and who will always remain so.

LETTER CVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 13th, 1707.

I RECEIVED only a line from you, Madam, by the last post, because of your severe cold, and though this indisposition is very common, I nevertheless pity you, knowing by experience that one suffers much with it; however, I am glad that your excursion to Fontainebleau has let you off so easily, since you were generally attacked by the fever there. The Duchess of Burgundy writes to the Queen to say, that she suffers much from her teeth, which may perhaps be attributed to her excursions on horseback round the canal; but I should not think her less disposed to resume them were it possible, it appearing to me, that the pleasures which she has enjoyed there are foremost in her thoughts. How does she look in

the face after so much fatiguing exercise? I could much wish that she would not spoil her complexion by hunting, like the Princess de Conti, and I should be very sorry if she injured her chest. I figure to myself this lovely Princess on horseback, with her graceful carriage, accompanied by the Princess of England, (who is also a good figure) and followed by several ladies magnificently dressed, whose shapes will bear no comparison with these two Princesses, even though they are particular enough to put on stays. I think that the court day, in honour of the Queen of England, was quite brilliant, and am not astonished that the foreigners who were present were in amazement, to see how the King could provide for the expences of the war, and at the same time keep up the splendour of his court. The Duke of Orleans and the Duchess are much to be commended, in not being able to bear the sight of a house, in which Madame de Montespan was accustomed to receive their visits. I think the former must be very anxious, on account of the dangers to which her husband is exposed at Lerida, and notwithstanding her apparently natural indifference, I do not think her inward feelings less exercised on account of this Prince. In possessing such qualities as he does, he is very deserving of her esteem. We receive letters every day from the army which he commands, informing us of his brilliant exploits, and that his example

is so animating to his troops, that words cannot well describe it; he has a great inclination and talent for war, is ambitious of glory, has an affectionate and boundless respect for the King, united to great love of country. If there be some failings blended with so many fine qualities, we must pass them over, and hope that more mature reflection will enable him to conquer them. We learnt by a courier, whom this Prince has despatched to the King, that the siege is advancing, and that it cannot probably last more than four or five days. We have had the good fortune, hitherto, to lose but few men, and scarcely any officers of distinction. If the besieged should stand an assault, it would not be possible to avoid a sacrifice of men, but it is thought they will not expose themselves to such a risk. His Royal Highness informs their Majesties, that immediately after the capture of this fortress, he shall come to Madrid, which will be probably to attend the ceremony of baptizing the Prince of Asturias: if he remains here a considerable time, he will not find many amusements, there being no public ones, and it does not suit individuals to give them for more than one reason. I think that his Royal Highness will take up his quarters in the house of the Duke d'Uceda, where he will be better accommodated, because he will be accompanied by all his officers, for it is the largest in Madrid, next to the palace, it belonged to the Queen-

mother, and is very near the palace. Marshal de Berwick, who continues writing to me upon every occasion, says nothing about returning to this court. So much for this country, now for that in which you live. Madame de Caylus gave me a short description of a doll she had sent you by your own desire, which I thought so droll, that I had the honour of reading it to their Majesties, who laughed at it most heartily; I fancied that I saw it, in all its ridiculousness, and I thought I perceived in it many characters that I met in my last journey to Paris; I should have begged my friend to make a copy for my amusement, and to take it unknown to the Queen into her chamber, in order agreeably to surprise her by this species of little monster; but I desisted, lest the Spaniards, on seeing it also, might form an indifferent opinion of French fashions. I think the ladies cannot be overpleased with your niece for having so well represented the extravagance of their head-dress and costume: however, they will have less reason to be angry at what she has done, than at themselves; I think them in general, very much inclined to be out of humour with a person who deserves, on so many accounts, your affection. All that you have said is to no purpose, for you will not convince me that you do well in not getting an apartment given to Madame de Caylus, and having her always near you, since you would find her of great assistance, possessing a well informed

mind, and the talent of rendering conversation delightful, without indulging in sarcasm. Do you think that such society would not be an ornament to your chamber, and agreeable to the King, who, besides, would be subjected to no inconvenience by it, since she has sufficient prudence to keep a secret? You will reprove me, Madam, for being too fond of her, and I shall reprove you for not loving her enough. God grant that you may not slight what I have the honour of saying to you!

The ambassador writes to the King to say, that he wholly resigns himself to his good pleasure, with which, I doubt not, but his Majesty will be satisfied. He is very unfortunate to have lost a son, whom he so affectionately loved, in so cruel a manner; and to complete his misery, those who call themselves his best friends, write to him as if he was the most culpable of men, saying, that if he had not come to Spain, in all probability, nothing of this kind would have happened to him. You know, as well as myself, that he came here in obedience to orders, and for the same reason he must continue here, although he passes his days with as much trouble and fatigue as lassitude. The Prince of Asturias begins to amuse the Queen, by laughing and assuming the most graceful airs; he is very well. I hope to congratulate you the next post, upon the capture of Lerida. I could wish never to have anything to communicate but what *would give* you pleasure, as I should be doubly

repaid by it, since the affairs of our kings would prosper, and your health be improved, for, upon my word, it is only the agitated state of mind and melancholy, that unfortunate events occasion you, which causes your indispositions.

P.S. The English envoy has just shown me a letter from the Duke of Berwick, informing him, that as soon as the affair of Lerida is concluded, and the troops are placed in winter quarters, he shall come to Madrid, and take up his abode with the envoy.

LETTER CVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 19th, 1707.

Your letter, dated Marly, November the 6th, evinces your impatience to hear of the capture of Lerida, which you probably know by this time, and it will have arrived very seasonably, to cure you of your cold and slow fever; for, to be told that affairs are prosperous, is the best of all remedies for you. Here then finishes the misfortunes of the Duke of Orleans, since he has the glory, as I had the honour of informing you, of taking this

important place, in spite of all the discouraging obstacles which he met with. The fact is, that nothing is done when nothing is attempted, except when enemies are to be met with, as imprudent as those who came to be beaten at the battle of Almanza. The King of Spain has just recompensed the boldness and good conduct with which the Marquis de Bay has restored to his authority Alcantara and Ciudad Rodrigo, which protect our loyal Castile from future incursions, by making him a knight of the golden fleece. As this captain general had asked for nothing, and was satisfied with having only done his duty to his sovereign, he was delighted at so unexpected an honour; and the feeling and respectful manner in which he has thanked their Majesties, has given additional satisfaction in having conferred this favour. It appears to me, that it is the only felicity of kings, to confer marks of distinction on grateful hearts, but they seldom enjoy this boon, because of the ingratitude that prevails amongst mankind.

We have heard here, that if there had been a better understanding between the Chevalier Forbin and M. du Guay Trouin, the cavalry and provisions which were proceeding to Portugal would not have escaped. This may not, perhaps, be true, but if it really was the case, Cardinal de Janson would certainly be very angry at his relation, if on such an occasion, he had not preferred

the King's service to his own feelings, more especially he who has rendered such important services by sea.

You are in the right in pitying me for all I suffer on the score of friendship, since I carry it too far, and in the first emotions, arising from an unfortunate event, I feel an internal agitation, which disturbs my blood. If I were naturally less cheerful than I am, and of a less happy temperament, I should suffer still more; however, I have a very tormenting rheumatism, which is only laughed at, and which I attribute to the above cause, and to cure which I shall endeavour to diminish my affection, and I think you will not do amiss to adopt the same remedy on your part.

I have had the honour of reading to the King, the passage in your letter concerning him, in which you say, that you have long been satisfied with him, there being so much good sense in his letter to you. Are you aware that his Majesty observed to me, that he was but little satisfied with you for being so easily gratified, and that he wished for more frequent tokens of your friendship. I shall take no part with your approbation in this species of warfare, from an excusable delicacy; besides, I shall do better not to interfere with the affairs of the great, with whom I am not over well acquainted how to act, and shall endeavour to follow your example, not having forgotten that *you were not a fit person* to have any thing to d-

with them. This humility made me examine myself and the Queen, and I have laughed at it most heartily more than once.

I have nothing to say to the refusal of the Duke of Orleans' request, but I cannot help pitying him, for not having obtained what he so ardently desires, and which would have enabled him to have civilly got rid of an improper connection, as princes are often in the habit of doing. I even presume to say, that his confessor would approve it, if he confided it to him. He will be entertained here with a species of opera, which the city of Madrid has caused to be composed upon the birth of the Prince. Their Majestics went to see it yesterday for the first time, when every exertion was made to please, for which we ought to feel obliged. The entertainment was given in the theatre of the Retiro, which is tolerably handsome; the scenery was magnificent, and it is asserted that the whole, including fire works, cost Madrid eighty thousand crowns, which would, I think, have been much better employed in paying the troops, and succouring persons of family who are in misery in consequence of having performed their duty. Nevertheless, there must be something to celebrate the birth of an heir to so many crowns: may God preserve to him that of Sicily, which might some day cause Naples to return to its allegiance, and afterwards Milan! It is very difficult to persuade the Italians, and even the Spaniards, that the

King has not made a treaty, which he has engaged to get approved by the King, his grandson, as he has done with the Milanese; because it cannot be imagined, if this were not the case, why some succours have not been sent to Palermo, however few they might be, which would have shown them that they were not abandoned, and which it is asserted, would have had a good effect, by soon causing the Neapolitans to return to their duty, sick as they are of the new government. You know, Madam, whether suspicions on this head are well or ill founded, and I have no pretensions to penetrate into what the King, our master, would wish to be concealed.

As I was about to seal this letter, I received two from his Royal Highness and Monseigneur, which inform me that they are going to besiege Morella, that the enemy had abandoned a small fortress, and that they were about to return to the plain of Urgel, in order to reduce it to its duty to his Majesty, to obtain some provisions in this fertile country, and to levy contributions for the subsistence of the troops. The Duke of Orleans will wait till Morella surrenders or is likely to do so, before he comes to Madrid, and the Marshal will follow him.

I must have fine patience with you, Madam! I entreat you to tell me why you have not reminded the King, that he should send the blue ribbon to the Prince of Asturias. Has his

Majesty forgot that he is his grandson, and that he gives it on the births of all the others, who have the same honour? Is it not because you are afraid lest this order should offend the Castilians, by intimating to them, that their Prince is of the house of France? I believe you are capable of it, and you think, perhaps, of establishing this new etiquette here, for you have let me know the taste you have for these things, which I cannot help, however, opposing. Be so good then, if it is your pleasure, to contrive so that the sacred order* may be sent as soon as possible, as it is also very necessary to illuminate us.

LETTER CIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 27th, 1707.

I do not know, Madam, whether any one but myself would exhaust herself in thanks to you for all your anxiety respecting my slow fever, for it cannot be doubted, from your known veracity, and your energetic expressions, but that what you write proceeds from the heart; but although mine is sensibly affected by them, I cannot help blaming you for having imagined, on the com-

* That of *Saint-Esprit*, or the Holy Ghost.

mencement of sickness, which did not appear at all dangerous, the most alarming consequences, since I fear it may have caused an anxiety prejudicial to your health, which is as dear to me as my own. When will you drive away these gloomy apprehensions, which make you anticipate so far off all sorts of misfortunes, the greatest part of which do not happen, but which have the same effect as if they did? If you would take the trouble of reflecting upon everything which has grieved you from mere appearances, and which have had no bad result, I am convinced it would be of use to you in future, and that you would pass your life more tranquilly. Mine, you think, is of more importance to the Queen than what it really is, and if God were pleased to take me from her, he would give her the consolations of which she might stand in need, for her kindness to me. This Princess knows how to make so good a use of the favours of Providence, that she deserves to receive from it rewards, and not mortifications. But I have said enough upon this subject.

Madame de la Salle has then well related to you matters concerning their Majesties, myself, and what she has observed in the palace. She must have made you laugh at her droll manner of describing certain things, and I am sure that, from her account of others, the Duchess of Burgundy and you must have been ready to shed tears, that so great and lovely a Queen, formed expressly

for a witty, agreeable, and polite court, should pass her days without meeting any thing suitable to her character. I am very glad that M. Clement and Madame de la Salle have been enabled to represent the Queen's situation, as it would never be believed, unless they had been constantly present to hear and see what was occurring. It appears to me that you are enchanted with their eloquent descriptions, and it is very honourable in us to send you back persons who may have acquired the character of good orators, to whom the academy of wits at Madrid is indebted for the commencement of a flourishing establishment; and if you send them again to us upon the same errand, they will attain such a degree of perfection, as to merit a place in your French Academy, although it should only be composed of learned men.

The Duke of Orleans will be here on Wednesday next, and the King sends him relays of horses to the distance of twenty leagues, in order that he may come that distance in one day. His Royal Highness will be splendidly accommodated in the palace, which was the abode of the Queen's mother, and is only a step from here. His suite of apartments, which, I am told, consist of twenty rooms upon the same floor, and having a southern aspect, will be as beautifully carpeted as those of his Catholic Majesty. I wish you had rooms as warm as these, which admit of currents of air,

for, if I recollect right, yours had no sun but in summer, and are very cold in the winter, which was the cause of your contriving a remedy that appeared to me very ingenious, and by which I was very comfortable when in your society. I often recall to mind those happy moments, and although my memory is not naturally good, I assure you, that I remember everything, even to the least trifle, that fell from your lips.

It is said that the Duke of Orleans has not all that is necessary for attacking Tortosa, and that after the baptismal ceremony is over, his Royal Highness will go to France for two months; but as he has said nothing of it in his letters to their Majesties, I know not yet what to think of the report. It is said that his domestics would be very glad of it, because they pass their time more pleasantly in France than in Spain, with which the generality of foreigners become tired. M. de Nancré, for one, has no reason to be satisfied with, being always unwell, and it is feared he will be obliged to submit to the grand operation. Marshal de Berwick will also come here, but not so soon. Our Prince is constantly improving in his health; the Marquis de Brancas saw him yesterday at Aste, in mentioning which, you see, that I am not ignorant of the suitable term; it is there that he is in the best humour, and where his pretty little person is most admired. I think that the envoy, who very attentively considered

him, will give a description of him to the King, on rendering an account of his commission, and that his Majesty would take a pleasure in seeing this new grandchild, although he has not yet thought him worthy the Blue ribbon. How shall I contrive to make my most humble acknowledgments to the Duchess of Burgundy, for writing so many obliging things about me to the Queen, on hearing of my indisposition? If you will not have the goodness to assist me, I know not what I shall do: it was my intention to write to her myself, but I thought she would find a degree of insipidity in explaining to her the extent of my gratitude. I cannot help, however, confiding to you my secret, which is, that I most heartily love this Princess, and what makes me feel the more convinced of it, is, that there is only one thing which hinders me from thinking her perfection itself, and that is, the neglect of her health, the fatal consequences of which make me shudder. May she not injure it still more this carnival! I beg of you, Madam, to take good care of yours.

LETTER CX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 2nd, 1707.

The Duke of Orleans arrived here yesterday, at seven o'clock in the evening, after travelling twenty

leagues during the day, and did not appear more fatigued or thinner for it. Their Majesties left their room, to go into the adjoining one, the sooner to have the pleasure of welcoming him. Cardinal Porto Carero, and the Inquisitor General, were also there, with several Lords of the court: I besought his Royal Highness to show some marked attention to the two former, knowing that the Cardinal is fond of being noticed, and he had the goodness to say some very gracious things to them, with his usual politeness. The King and Queen were informed by him, that he should shortly leave us to take a turn in France, and that Marshal de Berwick had also the same permission. The army will thus, then, be without a commander! I wish that all the lieutenant generals in it may agree together, and that they may have such deference for M. de Legal, who commands the principal corps, that opinions may not be divided upon the measures to be adopted, in case the enemy should be inclined to make some unexpected movements. His Royal Highness, to whom I owe all deference, and the Marshal, to whom I owe every civility, will in vain attempt to persuade me, that their absence cannot prejudice the public service, as I think quite the reverse: for we know but too well the effects of envy and jealousy in war as well as in courts, and that it may ruin everything. I have not yet had the courage to tell the Duke of Orleans, of his being positively refused the

favour which he so ardently wishes to obtain, for I confess to you, it would have been a great source of satisfaction to myself, to have contributed to his happiness on the present occasion.

The baptismal day is not yet fixed, because it is desirable first to regulate all the forms to be observed, so as to avoid misunderstandings. Cardinal Porto-Carero, who will officiate, is a little uneasy about the manner in which his Royal Highness may conduct himself towards him, and what is embarrassing on this account, is the want of precedents to follow, although we have no want of etiquette. You ask me, whether we have not proceeded so far with respect to the latter, as to be at liberty to visit the Duchess de Popoli; and my answer is, that if I had begun by this visit, there is not a grandee's lady but would complain of my not doing as much for her upon similar occasions. The *cameraras mayores* are only allowed to visit their daughters, sisters, and, I believe, nieces, that is to say, all their nearest relatives, provided it be on account of marriages, deaths, and when at the point of death: it is an attribute of this office, the same as that of the President of Castile who never visits, but who takes precedence over the grandees at his own house, the same as I do at home and everywhere else: from all which you will conceive, that we do not always act as we could wish. Poor Madame de Popoli has been in the

country some days, and on the day of her departure she ordered herself to be carried into my apartment, where the King and Queen hearing of it, did me the honour of coming, with the very kind intention of affording her some consolation; but, nevertheless, I think she will find none except in God, as she is visibly falling away and consumptive. Two of her daughters, her mother, and two sisters, are at Naples, where they are very ill treated by the Germans, and all the property of her family is already given to the enemy. She is one of the best creatures living, and was most assiduous in her endeavours to please the Queen; and, looking upon her as a mother, conceive, Madam, how much I shall regret her loss. The courier of his Royal Highness is on the point of setting out, and I have only time to say how glad I am that the fever has left you, I trust in God never to return, as then you will have the pleasure of enjoying in good health the sweets of peace, provided you make an honourable one, for otherwise remorse will pursue you the remainder of your life. I have just been told by his Royal Highness, that he had heard you and I were perfectly agreed to prevent him from capturing Lerida. I think, since we have not been able to do so, we shall act prudently in future not to play any tricks with him. I cannot as yet have the honour of thanking the Duchess of Burgundy for formally appointing me her

sponsor at the baptism of the Prince of Asturias, but shall wait till it is over to render her an account of it. I am very much grieved that an eruption has made its appearance upon the Prince's cheeks, because it defaces his beauty, and I could wish that on so solemn a day for the spectators, he might have appeared in all his charms to their admiring eyes, and I really do not know what I would give for that to be the case. You seem much inclined to make sport of me, Madam, but you cannot offend me.

LETTER CXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 12th, 1707.

The baptism of the Prince of Asturias took place on Conception day, with all possible pomp, and in the most orderly manner. Cardinal de Porto Carero had a new livery and splendid carriages. I had the honour of carrying the Prince in a sedan-chair, made entirely of glass, and brocaded with gold. We proceeded through the gallery of the palace, in which were carpets of the richest dyes, which the King of Spain had in his possession, and then entered the chapel, which was also covered with rich carpets. Two bishops assisted the Cardinal in the mass: all the

grandees were there, and walked foremost in the procession; his Royal Highness preceded the sedan five or six steps. As I had the honour of holding the Prince, I ordered the grandees to be covered, as from him, the governess acting as interpreter. I quitted this honourable title, Madam, on descending to the floor to assume another, which was still more honourable, since I had the honour of representing one of the greatest princesses on earth. I could have much wished to compensate, by an air of personal nobleness, the want of beauty and youth, in order to be less unworthy of acting so distinguished a character, and I never felt the chagrin of being old and devoid of charms more keenly than in representing so lovely a Princess as the Duchess of Burgundy. The Duke of Orleans, who had received the preceding evening a very beautiful coat from Paris, was, moreover, adorned with several diamonds, and his Royal Highness was deficient in nothing which could afford pleasure to those who saw him. Their Majesties chose six of the principal grandees, in order to carry all the utensils requisite for the baptism. The first was the Duke of Medina Cœli, then the Duke de Montalto, formerly Viceroy of Arragon; the Duke d'Ossuna, Captain of the body guards; the Duke de Plandia first gentleman of the bed chamber; the Marquises d'Astorga and d'Aguilar. The heads of the King's and Queen's household were stationed near their

Majesties, so that all these lords have reason to be satisfied, some with being chosen, and others with remaining at their posts, which they prefer to every other distinction. I should likewise have been satisfied with all this, if our little Prince's face had not been covered with the rash. I confess, Madam, that the lady of Marshal de la Motte could not have been more grieved than I was, had she been present at the ceremony. I derived, however, some small consolation from his crying so loud, as to leave no doubt of his good health, which continues, thank God, notwithstanding his nurse's occasional indispositions.

After this description of so great a day, I must not omit a circumstance respecting Cardinal Porto Carero, who gallantly sent presents to four ladies of honour of the Queen and Prince, and to all the female attendants, consisting of muffs, gloves, fans, snuff-boxes, and rings. But this did not satisfy his Eminence, for he would have the Queen and me to accept of jewels. The Queen's was a string, mounted in the Spanish style, of emeralds and diamonds, worth fifteen hundred pistoles, and mine eight hundred. Her Majesty did not think she should carry her complaisance to one of her subjects so far as to accept such a gift; and as to myself, I have for a long time announced that I would accept nothing, so that the Cardinal was obliged to submit to the Queen's will, and that of her *camerara mayor*, at which he

was a little mortified, but he must have patience. The Duke of Orleans is preparing to depart for Versailles next Saturday, after adopting all possible measures, to procure the supplies which this country can furnish. But allow me to tell you, that if M. de Chamillard suffers the French troops to want in future as they have done, all will be lost, the truth of which assertion, his Royal Highness will but too well confirm. He assures us, that he will not be long absent, at which I am very glad, and should be still more so if you sent him back well satisfied, for he certainly deserves some respect to be paid him, and he is not the first Prince who has desired some distinctions for certain persons, which in fact render them neither more estimable or despicable. But it is certain, that it enables them more easily to leave them, when God touches the hearts of their protectors, or when the strength of reason gets the better of their weaknesses. You will, perhaps, scold me for harping upon this string, but you have accustomed me to conceal nothing from you that comes into my mind. We have heard that the King has given the government of Limosin to Marshal de Berwick, at which I am truly glad, because this mark of favour could not be bestowed upon one who deserves it better. The Marshal has told me of it, and I learnt by one of his letters this morning, that he will be here the day after to-morrow. I could very much wish him to

remain in Spain, and that instead of going to see his lady, he would return to the command of the army, which will certainly be awkwardly situated without a general, and principally because the enemy are reinforcing theirs with nine or ten thousand men, which they are sending by sea into Catalonia. I cannot even conceive, how it could enter into the brain of so sensible a man as Monseigneur, to lose sight of the French and Spaniards, whom he knows by experience have occasion for a commander of influence. I shall have the honour of giving him my candid opinion, and he may afterwards act as he pleases. I am as sorry as you can be at the fresh affair between the lady of Marshal de Noailles and the Duke de Bouillon; she had no need of the exercise it will give her to make her blood circulate, since it is in a continual state of agitation. The Duke de Noailles, who knows so well how to blend vivacity with moderation, must reconcile once for all these two houses together, since he is the most capable of doing so, if it be practicable. I am not astonished that you take such an affectionate interest in so estimable and amiable a nephew as he is. I could wish you to see all the letters which he writes to us here, and the good account he sends of the occurrences in Catalonia, as nothing can be more sensible or connected; would to God the King had many subjects like him! he would be better served, and you would have

fewer enemies. I conclude, in order to have the honour of writing to the Duchess of Burgundy, therefore I make no apologies, since I take leave of you, for a person who is dearer to you than yourself.

LETTER CXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 18th, 1707.

We witnessed with regret, the departure of the Duke of Orleans this morning, although he promised their Majesties that he should not be long absent. Marshal de Berwick would also insist on setting out; and he left us four hours before his Royal Highness. The King and Queen used their best efforts to prevent him from absenting himself from the army; thinking that the French and Spaniards, who compose it, have need of a general like him, to keep by his influence the troops to their duty, but nothing could stop him; alleging as an excuse, that no mischief could happen during his absence. Nothing appeared of the pretended misunderstanding between his Royal Highness and him, and they spoke of each

other as they ought; their views are not always the same, as you will have perceived, with respect to the siege of Lerida, but being of different opinions, should not prevent them from being friends; especially when the inferior officer knows how to pay proper respect to his superior, as does my lord. The King will certainly talk over matters with his Royal Highness and him, with respect to past and future operations; his Majesty will explain his sentiments clearly, and form a better opinion than any one, and whether there be anything to correct in the measures which have been adopted. The Duke of Orleans will represent to you, the King and Queen, as I have had the honour to speak of them, and it is certainly much to be regretted, that a king who possesses every good quality that one could wish, is so diffident of himself as ours; for he has only to speak out boldly what he thinks, to obtain admiration. His Royal Highness conversed with him in a very sprightly manner, which gave me great pleasure, because it seemed to exhilarate him, which he has occasion for. If the Queen and I were not so cheerful, the King would be still more serious, for certainly the Spaniards of his court possess a gravity of character ill calculated to make him throw it off; they are far from being jocular, and when they attempt to be so, they excite an inclination for grief, rather than laughter. We shall have a comedy to-morrow, which will last four

hours; it is in celebration of the King's birth-day. I could wish the Duchess of Burgundy, and the Princess of England, might see such a one at Versailles, in addition to the diversion of hunting; the opera, good eating, and keeping untimely hours; the last of which I cannot pardon in our Princess, although she may be offended at me, for she will certainly destroy her health, as well as her beauty, which will drive her to despair. She wrote to the Queen, by the last post, that you had a very bad sick head-ache, which prevented you from writing; although a painful complaint, from its not being dangerous, I am less sorry that you have it sometimes, rather than the fever. I hope that since it has left you in repose for three months, you will not have it for a long time again. The capture of Morella will, moreover, strengthen your health, that being a place very necessary to us. If M. de Chamillard can, next year, provide money for the payment of the troops, you will doubtless see Spain in a good state, the Portuguese much embarrassed, and the Archduke undeceived. An agreement has just been made with the Marquis de Santiago for six months; which will prevent the troops from dying of hunger. It was of the greatest consequence to induce this man to accede to the measure; he has already advanced two or three millions of francs, and therefore deserves to be treated with good faith by M. de Chamillard, for without this aid, all would have

been lost, and he is the only and sole individual in Spain who could or would do what he has done. But in order to accomplish it, the King, the Duke of Orleans, the ambassador, and my Lord, found it necessary to use their powerful exertions, thus acting in concert, for the public good, and succeeding in their object. I congratulate you upon it, and could wish that we had never any thing but good news to communicate to each other; for I assure you that I ought to be as much alive to your happiness, as to my own, being more devoted to you than I have words to express.

P.S. You are about to enjoy good society, since the Duke de Noailles has informed me that he should soon be at Paris. He is one of the most amiable men I ever knew, therefore I have doubted whether you could have more affection for him than I have. It appears that his mother has forgotten me. Do you not pity the poor Duchess d'Estreés, for losing her daughter, her only remaining child: her understanding civility, and goodness of heart, are sufficient to make me desire she were happier, and nothing, it appears to me, would more contribute to it than the presence of the Abbé de Vaubrun, her brother, whose disgrace has lasted a long time. Pardon, I beseech you, Madam, the liberty I take, of speaking to you on this subject, as my inten-

tion is certainly not to displease the King, and I flatter myself that you will answer for me.

Allow me to enclose you a letter for the Duke de Noailles.

LETTER CXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 25th, 1707.

I DID not expect, Madam, after a truce of three months, which you had made with the fever, that all the effects you derive from it would be to feel yourself languishing, which you say you have been for some days. I hope you will soon regain your strength, for I have abstained from thinking things at the worst, as you know I give you no quarter in regard to your gloomy thoughts, because they kill you, and I cannot live without you.

The Duke of Orleans, whose journey I had at first taken the liberty to oppose, chiefly because I also feared that of M. de Berwick's having promised the King and Queen to return soon, I do not think any mischief can result from it. His Royal Highness may even offer some explana-

tions to the King, from which his Majesty will give him the best advice for his government in the next campaign, whether on the Portuguese side or that of Catalonia. The greatest good fortune that could happen to us would be, that the King should see everything very clearly; for without offending all the generals and ministers, he knows more than they do, and his knowledge and prudence would prevent many faults.

You are very right in saying, that it often happens that what we imagine we know, is quite opposed to what we are ignorant of; I am convinced of this, by the daily conversation of people who are not in the secret, and who blame or complain without cause, and who might soon be brought to reason, if prudence did not compel us to be silent upon affairs which require secrecy; so that we hear ourselves sometimes condemned, when we could make friends of our judges. You will have often heard courtiers complaining of you at the same moment that you have just rendered them a service; and others, perhaps, will have thanked you, when you have done them neither good nor harm. There is, therefore, if you are to be believed, only to endure much, be the envy of every one, have patience, and increase, if possible, my affection for their Majesties; and if I did so I must be more silly than I am, and, consequently, should take good care not to follow your advice, as it would be too prejudicial to

me; and I will endeavour to make the ensuing year more auspicious than the past. I have already begun to divide my affections, by giving a part of them to the Prince of Asturias, with whom I have the honour to play; and his pleasing smiles consoles me very much for the time I am absent from the Queen, which you will scarcely believe, but nothing is more true.

I do not know from what motive the King of Spain has paid so much attention to your last letter; but having perused, and re-perused it, several times, I doubt much whether it be not to conclude his correspondence with you; and I fear lest this war declared, should increase still more in violence, and you give each other strange blows.

What makes me apprehend it is, that his Majesty makes a kind of mystery of it, and boasts of knowing how to love better than any other person: he has learnt under a master, since he came out of the hands of the Duke de Beauvilliers, safe and sound, who knows more than he does on this subject, as you very justly observe.

Your humility is carried very far, when you say, that you are mistrustful, and even fearful, lest I should be displeased at your refusing me something; I am, however, too vain to believe that you would carry your complaisance to the length of being in pain, not to grant me what I desire, since I do myself the honour of submitting my wishes

to your more correct understanding, and it is in moments, when I think I have less imperfection about me; insolence is unbecoming in every one, and selfishness is one of the vilest defects that we can have, but when they are joined to others in the same person, it must be owned that he is hateful and despicable.

I have so agreeably surprised and delighted a person this morning, by reading a passage in your letter relative to him, (I allude to the Marquis de Bay) that he was ready to take post to go and thank you for it in person; however, he satisfied himself by intending to convey his respectful compliments by letter, from which I prevented him, by assuring him, that it would much diminish your esteem for him, that you could not bear those who wrote to you, and that you liked, still less, those to whom you wrote. He replied, "What I have just heard, Madam, appears to me very extraordinary; however, I shall follow your advice, and suppress my feelings." This general only wishes to act for the service of his master; he has always been fortunate in this country, and the Spaniards like him extremely.

We shall, then, at length, see the Prince of Asturias decorated with the blue ribbon, notwithstanding all your reflections on the uneasiness that you think it will create here. The *Queen* did me the honour of saying to me, a

short time ago, in the King's presence: "it is necessary, that it should appear in everything and every where, that the royal house of France reigns in this monarchy, to habituate some to it by gentle means, others by force, and to make a gradual mixture of these two nations, only distinguishable by name, and especially, never to intermarry our children, but with one another; I have never thought otherwise at any time." This Princess surprises still more by the goodness of her heart, than the penetration of her mind, and I am persuaded she will be one of the greatest Queens who has occupied the throne. The ambassador cannot conceal his astonishment, when he reflects upon all her admirable qualities, and asserts, as well as myself, that he does not know a fault in her charcter. I ought no longer to incur your suspicions, after such eulogiums from a minister so sensible as he is, and my new attachment to the Prince of Asturias, which will in some measure abate that for her Majesty.

It is possible that his Royal Highness may have several different connections, and that those who wish to divert him, have taught him to what lengths folly may go, when they will have it, that you and I are angry at the important conquests which he has made; this news, probably, comes from the same quarter that made you so good a friend of the Emperor, and me of Queen Anne and the Duke of Savoy. M. d'Aubigny has not

failed to acquaint me of the honour which you have done him, in permitting him to visit you, and the kind manner in which you have talked of what concerns me; and I expect, when he returns, which will be in a fortnight or three weeks, that he will give me an account, without omitting a word, of everything you have said, for he appeared to be so full of it, as not to let the least circumstance escape his memory, I have some difficulty in believing, but that you found it difficult to detain him in your room, for respect would induce him not to trespass upon your civilities, and he must have thought, that he ought not to have had so long an audience. Those with which the King has honoured him, are fresh proofs of his Majesty's kindness, for which I very humbly beseech you to offer him my respectful thanks. I wait this gentleman's return, to know the particulars of everything, as he writes to me wonders respecting all he saw; and from the Duchess of Burgundy's person and mind, she appeared to him one of the greatest wonders. The Queen pities her very much, for her uneasiness at being pregnant, and I am also sorry for it, on account of her sufferings; however, when I think of the necessity there is for her to have children, as well as the Queen, all my pity vanishes, and I wish, notwithstanding the indispositions they feel, that they may give birth to several princes. I pity poor Madame de O. very much, for having wit-

nessed her daughter's dangerous accouchement. Instances of this kind do not alarm the Queen, because, for one that is unfortunate there are a thousand otherwise.

The pleasure I feel is inexpressible, whenever you assure me that the Duchess of Burgundy honours me with her regards, and that she has some partiality for me, for I am very anxious to please her: her conversation is too insinuating and witty, not to diffuse through her court whatever might be wanting in it; and I think, that if I had had the honour of paying mine to her more frequently, she would have made me better company than I am. You have given a charming description of the Duke of Burgundy to the Catholic King, and I am pleased with myself in recognizing it so natural; it is indeed very fortunate to find, in so great a Prince, all the christian and royal virtues united. If these two brothers are happy in having two such perfect Princesses, the latter ought not to be less thankful to God, for having given them Princes endowed with such good qualities. The death of M. Moreau is a real loss, because he was a very honest man, and affectionately attached to his master, real worth being so rare in every station of life. I have heard much good of M. de Niert, therefore I rejoice that he has made him his heir, provided the relations of the deceased did not stand in need of his inheritance.

I should be very sorry if the illness of Madame de la Motte increased, and I can easily conceive the uneasiness of the Duchess de Ventadour.

The Duchesses de Beauvillars and de Chevreuse are much to be pitied for losing so many relatives. The Archbishop of Rouen was still very young when he died; I knew him formerly pretty well, and his conversation appeared to me agreeable. Madame de Beauvilliers, her husband and myself, have kept up a singular intercourse since they undertook the charge of providing the Prince's wardrobe. The Marquis de Torcy also writes to me rather often, and I believe I am not in bad favour with the whole of this family; at least, I do what I can to deserve the honour of talking to you about Marshal de Berwick, who returned to Madrid four days ago. The King certainly could not do better than to give him the order. If he honestly says what he thinks of it, he would agree that his presence was absolutely necessary at Valencia and in Arragon, where his Majesty has given him absolute authority, and where a thousand disorders take place, on account of soldiers quarters and ill executed orders. Many ecclesiastics complain with and others without reason; these districts require to be governed with firmness, and without driving the people to despair, which cannot be done by mere lieutenant generals, who are deficient in influence, and seldom agree in opinion. A trifling affair has just hap-

pened, which has much displeased the King: the regiment of Louvigny has suffered itself to be surprised in its quarters, and six hundred and fifty men, of which it was composed, have been cut to pieces: it is said that proper precautions had not been adopted; nearly two hundred of them have since returned; you see that it is not only to Frenchmen that these sort of misfortunes happen, and that mistakes are everywhere committed, for which reason I recur to my first opinion, which is, that whether it be winter or summer a general should not leave the army, particularly in districts which are not safe from ill-intentioned people, unless it be on the most important business for their sovereign; and as my lord had not written a word upon the subject to the Catholic King, nor to any body else, of his intention to go to Versailles, it was necessary that his Majesty, learning it only through public report, and being aware that his journey would be prejudicial to his service, should write about it to the King his grandfather. I have spoken of it on this ground to my lord, as a real friend, and he listened to me as such. I could very much wish that there was between him and the ambassador, a perfect reciprocity of confidence; but the Marshal does not seem to me disposed for it, although they agree very well together, and act for the public good. The Marshal told me, when I did my best to persuade him to it, that he

can never speak of business to M. Amelot, because they differ in opinion, and that both are proud. I do not know whether it is because I am a female, that they evince nothing of it in my presence, or whether it is not greater than they ought to possess; but it is a fact that I have not perceived our ambassador assume more haughty airs than became him, nor that my lord was deficient in the politeness due to the character with which the former is invested. You appeared to me formerly surprised to hear pretended disagreements between these two personages spoken of, but this cannot be considered as such: however, I would give a great deal if they had more confidence in each other. I have thought it my duty to inform you, Madam, of what is passing, although it is against my inclination, disliking to enter into particulars of this nature, and only wishing for the tranquillity and happiness of every body.

P.S. The ambassador has just told me, that Marshal de Berwick had a conference with him and some other persons, to arrange with the Marquis de Santiago everything respecting the provisions which the latter is to furnish, at which I am much pleased, since it shows a co-operation so useful to the service. My lord will set out to-morrow or the day after, and I hope everything will go on prosperously. M. Burlet, first physician to the King, has had a good journey. Their Majesties have received him well, and from what

we have seen of him hitherto, he is the person we required. He brought me a letter from M. Fagon, which contains too many things to his advantage, for me not to be already prejudiced in his favour. I could wish to have answered him this post; but after so long a missile as this, I have no more leisure. The compliments on the baptismal ceremony overwhelm me; I pray you, therefore, to be so good as to tell the first physician the reason which prevents me from answering him, for I should be very sorry if, esteeming him as I do, he should suspect me of any negligence towards him.

LETTER CXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 31st, 1707.

The French post, which should have been here the day before yesterday, has not yet arrived, and to all appearance will not come this week, at which I am truly sorry, because you told me in your last letter, that you had continued in a debilitated state for some time, which gave me pain, and also, the uncertainty of the Duchess of Burgundy, as to her pregnancy; and the chagrin

which this Princess will experience, if she finds herself in that state, from being no longer able to run about, to dance, and keep late hours, grieves me; but, on the other hand, I could wish her to have another Prince, for, in truth, it is no great thing to have only one, and I hope that our two Princesses will not, in this respect, be niggardly to France and Spain. The one we have here is continually increasing in strength, and M. Burlet is very well satisfied with him.

The King received, this morning, tolerably good news of Catalonia from the governor of Rosas, and a son of the Duke d'Huescar, who was prisoner at Barcelona, and is returned from it. I doubt not but the Duke de Noailles has received it also. These two individuals assert, that the capture of Lerida has thrown the enemy into great consternation; that a shot has been fired into the carriage of Count d'Orompera, in the evening, with the intention of killing the Archduke's Secretary of State, who was thought to be in it; that this Prince, having commanded Italian plays to be performed, the populace had pelted the windows with stones; and, what is still worse, there was scarcely any more corn, and that there would be none at all, if they did not procure some from Roussillon. I do not think the King would be so complaisant towards the Catalonians, unless the same boats which took them this succour brought back the Archduke by way of payment;

in which case it appears to me, that the bargain would not be a bad one, as it would be cruel to let them die of hunger. You, then, Madam, who are so averse to forming new acquaintances, and who only do so from the fear of me, might well incur my indignation, if you did not receive this Prince in your room with Mesdames d'Hudicourt, de Dangeau and de Saint Geran. I will not, however, be responsible to you for his not getting weary, however good the company he may meet with there, unless every one brought him some little *agnus Dei* to build altar pieces, and you had large rosaries suspended to your waists, for there is no other amusement or devotion with which he is so much affected. The King of Portugal being, thank God, so like him, I am not astonished they are such good friends, and could only wish the Duke of Savoy had the same taste; our affairs would then be more prosperous, but unfortunately, their pursuits are different, and the Duke scarcely shows his external devotion; for which reason, I know not whence the report originated of his Royal Highness having become a devotee, nor the objects of such reports, of which I hear no more. I think the Duke of Orleans must, by this time, have arrived in Paris. This letter, Madam, is, I think, pretty long for one who thought she had nothing to write about, and is a good proof of the pleasure I feel, when I have the honour of addressing you: I shall never forget that which I en-

joyed, when you were pleased to allow me a seat near you in your snug corner, nor all the kindnesses with which you continually honour me.

LETTER CXV.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, October 14th, 1708.*

INDEED, Madam, we have need of patience to sustain ourselves, and not be depressed with grief at the untoward events which happen at a time when least expected.—We were given to understand that a position had been taken, so as to prevent the enemy from receiving ammunition or provisions, and it was said that if this measure had been sooner adopted, the siege of Lisle would, ere this, have been raised, yet the army, however numerous it may be, has suffered a convoy of five hundred waggons to pass, and furnish the means of continuing the siege!

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* Nine months' correspondence of this year, during which the interchange of letters between Madame de Maintenon and the Princess des Ursins was very regular, are missing, as may be observed from the letters of the Princess, up to the end of November of this year.—*Note of the original manuscript.*

Count de la Motte was too weak to impede its progress, and he experienced a check which might have been avoided, had the reinforcement which was sent to him arrived sooner; but it was sent off too late, although it might have been foreseen that convoys would come on that side. Such are the reasonings of men, and not mine, for I should be very sorry to fall into the same error as women do who talk of war. The Chevalier de Luxembourg has conducted his march well, and Marshal de Boufflers must have given him a hearty reception, as it is asserted that he began to want powder; it is to be wished that he may have enough to make such a fire as will discourage Marlborough from finishing what Prince Eugene had commenced, and that better measures may be adopted in future, which may compel his lordship to abandon his enterprize. Good heavens! Madam, how much the King is to be pitied, and what a source of unhappiness the Duchess of Burgundy and you must have! The devotion of this Princess exceeds that of the generality of people; and although the prayer, which she offers up at night, before the holy Sacrament, cannot but be very acceptable to the Almighty, since she deprives herself of her natural rest for this purpose, yet I think they would be heard with complacency, were she to make them by her bed-side with the same fervency, and that he does not require any efforts destructive of her health, which is

so necessary. I can easily conceive that her days are shortened, and that the expectation of it does not allow her to go out: she has no other solace than that of the conversation of the King, and an amiable friend as affectionately attached to her as you are. I should prefer the court removing to Marly, instead of remainingat Versailles, because it appears to me, that a species of liberty is found there, which alleviates grief a little, besides the pleasantness of the walks. We have nothing here that is amusing, while we have to suffer everything which you suffer, with still sadder anticipations of the future, but we must endeavour to bear everything with patience.

Count de Marsin is of a family, the members of which must expect to die of apoplexy, and his short neck should prepare him for it. I think that Madame de Saint-Geran begins to recover; but I am sorry that she has not yet strength enough to return to court; I am very much so for the death of the Count de Fiesque; M. de Noirmontier and myself always loved him as a brother: his conversation was very agreeable, and he was an honest man at heart; my brother has lost in him a friend whom he can never replace, and whose services he required in his present situation. I did not know that Marshal de Noailles had experienced a relapse, nevertheless, you write to tell me, that he is so ill as to occasion great uneasiness to all his family, which I feel as much as they

do, because I have always sincerely esteemed and honoured him, and I know that no person is more attached to you than he is, which is an additional reason for my being still more anxious for his recovery. What would become of his lady if she had the misfortune to lose him?

Cardinals d'Estrées and Janson are at an age liable to indispositions; I wish, at least, that they may not be dangerous.

The Duchess of Orleans has not much to sacrifice in becoming a devotee, except her indolence. The virtue she has always possessed, and her sweet disposition, will naturally incline her to adopt this mode of life: it is thought she will soon have the satisfaction of seeing her husband again; it is not known whether his Royal Highness will first come to take leave of their Majesties, but I know that they would be very glad for him to visit Madrid in his way, and that they would feel slighted by this Prince, if he departed without bidding them adieu, but I cannot think he will. The Duchess de Roquelaure has acted like a good mother, in taking charge of the Prince de Leon. It is clear, from the grief of the Duke de Rohan, that good blood cannot belie itself, and it appears to me, that his lady would have done better to follow his example, than to suffer herself to be so importuned to see her son. There is, as it appears, something a little extraordinary in the proceedings of all these persons,

although, in other respects, they are not destitute of merit.

LETTER CXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, October 22d, 1708.

How will the family of de Noailles be distracted, Madam, in losing so good a father and so honest a man as the Marshal was?—It will, I fear, render them inconsolable! What a sight it must have been to see him die, in the midst of so many persons, who would willingly have saved his life by the sacrifice of their own! What a source of grief to you, to witness the departure of so devoted a friend, and who was so grateful for your kindnesses! What a painful duty for the Cardinal to assist a brother in his last moments! and what a cruel affliction for the Marshal's Lady and the Duchess de Guiche, to see themselves deprived for ever of him whom they affectionately loved! Indeed I cannot imagine to myself, so melancholy a catastrophe, without shedding tears. I greatly pity the Duke de Noailles, whose goodness of heart I know, and who will sensibly feel the loss he has just sustained. How deserving of praise the Duchess of Burgundy is for everything she does! Is there any thing deficient in her sentiments, which makes her act like private individuals, in forgetting her rank,

when it is in question, to give proofs of her friendship to those whom she honours with her good opinion. This great Princess, by such engaging manners, will gain all hearts, which will be a source of satisfaction to you, for I am persuaded she will attribute to you a great share of the approbation she may receive, when she thinks of everything, great, good, and christian-like with which you have inspired her mind; but I also believe, that your modesty will prevent you from receiving any of it, on your own account. You make me tremble by the information, that you have a slow fever, and that you fall away; I flattered myself that your health, notwithstanding all your chagrin, was not so bad as usual, and I hoped that it would be completely re-established, if the siege of Lisle was raised; but, unfortunately, you tell me the reverse, which is to me a new source of cruel uneasiness, for indeed I have so firmly attached myself to you, that I suffer sensibly from whatever may cause you any pain. If it is certain that the enemy have been repulsed in their last attacks, as it is asserted, they may probably be discouraged, especially as their soldiers are very much fatigued, and their army greatly diminished; in that case, all the affairs of Flanders would assume a different aspect; the Duke of Burgundy would go and dry up the tears of his lady, and restore to you some tranquillity. All this appears very possible, and we

must refrain from despondency, since there are so many instances of things, which were thought to be at the worst, becoming again the best in a moment. It is fortunate that Marshal de Boufflers is satisfied with his officers, concord being so necessary for the good of the service. The admiration of this general is not less in our court than in yours, and his merit cannot be too much extolled; it elevates him far above the weaknesses of the greatest part of other men, and which we experience on our side so frequently. How unfortunate it is for kings not to be able to do everything themselves! His Majesty being betrayed by several of his subjects, on whom he had relied as being the most loyal, had showered upon them favours and honours, witness the brother of Count de Xifuentes, whom he had just made a grandee in Sardinia, and who went over to the Archduke, without any other motive than that of committing an infamous action. The governor of Port Mahon is little better, since he lost so important a post either by cowardice or treason; but he came nevertheless to Carthagena, with as careless an air as if he expected to be well received in Spain. What adds still more to our afflictions is, that M. de la Jonquiére, with the battalion which he commanded, has, together with our poor Frenchmen, been basely treated by the enemy, they having broken the capitulation which he made with them, and which the ambassador will send to the King; it

is an extraordinary affair, and ought to be well looked into. The Duke de Noailles, who was apprehensive for this place, despatched a courier here with the information that the fleet was about to attack it, and I cannot help saying that his attention and foresight are really admirable for his age. The King and Queen highly distinguish and esteem him, as a valuable friend. I revert again to the loss of Port Mahon, which is of great consequence for our two Kings, because it will expose the trade by sea, and alarm our coasts. I have already dwelt too much upon this afflicting subject, but there is no possibility of introducing cheerfulness into the correspondence which I have with you, unless Providence puts forth an assisting hand; meanwhile, I do not fail to find relief from what I write to you, being persuaded that I unbosom myself to the sincerest friend I have, and to whom I am most devoted.

LETTER CXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, October 29th, 1708.

PERMIT me, Madam, to tell you, that I do not comprehend why you think Lisle will be lost, if it is true that M. de Marlborough wants pro-

visions, which is probable from the steps he has taken to secure the passing of the convoy, which he has not been able to effect, and that the Duke of Burgundy adopts every measure that ought to be taken, of which there can be no doubt, to frustrate the enemy's designs; the above is all that I shall observe upon this subject. The King of Spain speaks of nothing else, at which I am not surprised, for he is sufficiently interested in it, and he always flatters himself that the large army which his brother commands, will ultimately obtain advantages over one that is so much diminished, and which must be greatly exhausted. His Majesty, who fears nothing, always thinks that bold actions should be attempted, and that they are oftener crowned with success than a more cautious system. This Prince, from what is said, has a great talent for war, and reasons upon it as justly as if he had more experience. Prince Eugene has extricated himself with little loss: it appears to me, that neither he nor Marlborough fall asleep, and that they do not fear us so much as I could wish. The death of the Countess de Soissons will not, I think, be regretted by many persons; but I think, however, that the lady of the Constable Colonna, will feel it as much as she is capable of doing, for I saw while at Barcelona that she liked her very much, but she may have altered her mind on removing to another country. I shall inform

you, since you order me, of what you wish to know respecting the Duke of Orleans, but it will not be by this post, because it is necessary to see the answers, which his Royal Highness will give to their Catholic Majesties, as well as myself, in order the better to afford you information: I can say beforehand, that his Royal Highness has reason to be satisfied with all my proceedings, having endeavoured only to gratify him, and to show him my respectful attachment. The King and Queen, on their side, have done all in their power to give him proofs of their friendship and gratitude. It would be lamentable, after all this, to imagine that he had cause for dissatisfaction. The life which the Elector passes at Compiegne would be more agreeable, than that which our Princes lead, if he could have his mind sufficiently at ease on affairs which so peculiarly interest him; but I doubt whether he relishes very tranquilly the pleasures of the chase, and whether he again finds in Madame d'Arco the same faculty of amusing him, which he formerly enjoyed. It is, however, asserted that his Royal Highness always continues his confidence in those ladies to whom he has once given it. I have been told that the Chevalier de Bavaria is very handsome.

The Prince de Vaudemont has acquainted me with the dangerous illness of his lady, and that the physicians assured him it has relieved her from several bad humours, and that her life will be

prolonged many years. The Duchess d'Elbœuf is about to visit a very prudent and estimable daughter, a widow, young and beautiful as this Princess; her good conduct is hitherto worthy of praise, and I think she would know how to act in future, although her mother should not give her any advice. I think that the pension which the King of Spain has allowed her will be out of the best securities there are, and I assure you that I use every effort in her behalf. Nothing appears to me better than the Duchess of Burgundy's answer to Monseigneur, in your room, when she said that she was in a tremor lest the Duke of Burgundy should march against the enemy, and with the fear lest he should not; but what delights me still more is, that the Princess is not aware of all the value of this observation, for it would be diminished if she had maturely premeditated it; as it is much better proceeding from the heart, than the head. I received the Queen of England's letter, which you did me the honour to forward; but it is not of recent date, that I have been accustomed to receive proofs of her extreme kindness, and I should be too happy if I could deserve to be honoured by her in future, by a still more difficult proof than that which I have just now given of my faithful and respectful attachment. Her Majesty will always find me sincere and without disguise, as I shall be with you, for it would be impossible not to tell you

candidly my thoughts, although they should even be to my disadvantage; after this frank avowal, should I not be in the right to reproach you for the question you ask me, with a very serious air, respecting the ennui which your letters occasion? In whatever style they are written, they can only be honourable and valuable to me, and I find a species of consolation, or rather a pleasing melancholy, even in your most gloomy expressions: they added to my joy formerly, full of sportiveness and delicate raillery, which is your forte, alone; in fine, all is good belonging to them; continue then to honour me with them as you have hitherto done.

LETTER CXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 4th, 1708.

I do not know, Madam, how to answer what you do me the honour of writing to me, since all appears to me incomprehensible, as much on account of the defence made by Marshal de Boufflers, as because the enemy's convoy was not prevented from passing. I could not, perhaps, avoid speaking improperly, if I meddled in so

prehension; I had better, therefore, be silent and keep to myself the mortal chagrin of seeing that we are losing ourselves in a conjuncture which would naturally change everything in our favour, if we knew how to profit by it: this is, in truth, a very cruel case. The King's letters to his ambassador do not alleviate our sufferings, as you may conceive; he will render an account to his Majesty of the feelings of the King and Queen, which are as they ought to be on such an occasion; therefore I have nothing more to add, except that their Majesties will never suffer themselves to be depressed by bad fortune, and that they will always have the fortitude to sustain it, without apprehending anything unworthy of their descent. Nothing appears to me nobler and more correct than your manner of thinking, to tell the most unpleasant truths in private to our sovereigns, and to defend their conduct and interests to the last in public: this is the way, in which they ought to be loved, but it is rarely the case, and if it were less so, the generality of princes would be better served than they are, and would not commit the mistakes which they often do. Marshal de Villeroi is truly unfortunate in having lost his wife, who was a very sensible woman, and might have consoled him in his misfortunes. You have no difficulty in persuading me, that you feel it, kind and generous as I know you to be; it will not be so easy for you to make me believe, that he no

longer considers you as his friend. He must have very much altered since the conversations he had with M. d'Aubigny at Paris, for I protest to you the Marshal said the same that I think of you; having repeated to him, several times, that he never knew a woman who had so much intellect, uprightness, accomplishments, nobleness, and goodness as yourself.

I am very sorry for the situation of the Countess de Beuvron; I was under essential obligations to her, of which I shall speak to you more at large at another opportunity.

Do not you think, Madam, that you will have too many Queens in France, if the Queen of Poland is going to fix at Tours? When I was at Rome, there was no probability of her taking that step; although she was not her own mistress, she kept a numerous court, and it appears to me, that unless she had taken the resolution of absolutely shutting herself up in a convent, it would suit her better than the court which the shopkeepers will pay to her in the city she has chosen for her residence, unless she still thinks herself Mademoiselle d'Arquien. His Majesty sometimes does me the honour of writing to me, and enclosing me his letters to their Catholic Majesties. Enclosed is another letter for the Duke de Noailles, which I very humbly beg you to forward. I am more and more confirmed in the good opinion which I entertain of the Duke, because I di

in him the capacity and prudence of one who has skilfully managed various affairs, and the vivacity and sprightliness so requisite for agreeable conversation. If I can be of any service to the Irish lady whom you honour with your protection, I will neglect no opportunity of promoting her wishes. I would do more difficult things to convince you of my respectful attachment.

LETTER CXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 12th, 1708.

The capture of Lisle, Madam, has not failed to astonish this court, although Marshal de Boufflers defended it so long, and was so hard pressed, because we always flattered ourselves that the enemy would want provisions, or that our army would compel them to raise a siege, which was carrying on in their presence. God has been pleased to order otherwise, and he has permitted divisions amongst our generals, to prevent them from adopting good measures till it was too late; one cannot help saying that it is a heart-breaking event, and that one can no longer distinguish in it the character of our nation, so different from what it was formerly! Glory was then the incentive to action, whereas, at the present day, it

scarcely seems susceptible of that sentiment, and aspires to nothing more than an indolent existence, or the enjoyment of pleasures very much opposed to its duty. Count Berjeyeck thinks that if good measures were adopted, we might yet conclude the campaign fortunately, but everything depends on this. It is not conceived here that Marshal de Berwick advises that the enemy should be bought off, after the conquest they have so audaciously made. Every one who knows Flanders, wishes to persuade me, that they cannot keep Lisle, and that we can prevent them from retaking Bruges and Ghent, but it is not for me to decide, whether they are right; however, without blaming any one, I know that we are very unfortunate. The King and Queen are much grieved at all these cruel events, and fear lest they may be the forerunners of still greater misfortunes. M. de Chamillard's intended journey to Flanders, from what they have heard, redoubles their anxiety, knowing, as they do, that this minister would wish for peace upon any terms, and it is said that every one is dreadfully cast down, and will no longer hear of the continuance of the war. The only hope of their Majesties, is in the elevated mind of the King and his affection. The letter which he wrote last post to the King, his grandson, affords him encouragement, because he observes that the affair of Lisle will retard peace, and that both ought to make fresh efforts to continue the war, and

consolidate the throne of Spain. His Ch
Majesty can have no suspicion of the sin
of these observations, nor that the King
wish to amuse him by such means, in or
make a treaty like that of Milan, which, a
know, Madam, was made without his know
I leave you to judge of the very awkward pr
ment in which their Majesties are placed
whether the Queen's pregnancy is auspici
such a conjuncture as the present. I coul
to conceal from you a part of my chagrin,
aggravate yours, but there is no possibility of
it, not thinking it right to conceal any thi
am very sorry for all that our Princess suffe
although distant from her, I think I pe
whatever torments her, and I admire her th
for it. I could wish the Duke of Burgun
escape being censured either for his devot
his confessor: it would appear to me, th
real piety of a prince ought to be out
reach of scruples, and the Duke knows his re
sufficiently well to conduct himself witho
advice of his director, in the affairs of war,
are not in the province of priests, when it i
as the one now carrying on. Far-fetched
is more likely to disgust a soldier, than to n
convert of him, and I will not deny, that the
reports which prevail at Paris on this su
make a still greater impression here, wh

attended with a bad effect. I do my utmost to obtain more justice for the Duke of Burgundy.

The Queen will not write to you this post, being too much out of humour, and her Majesty would be afraid of aggravating your afflictions; she relies firmly on your friendship, and it is impossible for her to entertain more regard for any one than she does for you. As to myself, knowing my sentiments so well, it is superfluous to tell you how much I am devoted to you.

P.S. We know not as yet whether the Duke of Orleans will take Madrid in his way to France. Since you order me to tell you, upon what terms his Royal Highness is with their Majesties, or those upon which we are with him, I thought I could not do better, by way of explaining them, than sending you the enclosed memorial, drawn up by M. Amelot, and read by him to the King; who has approved the whole of it, remembering all its contents, and saying that it contained the truth and required no alteration. His Majesty is truth itself, and may be believed upon his word. In other respects, I can assure you that the King, the Queen, the ambassador and myself, have nothing whatever to reproach ourselves with on his account. He has received, both in public and private, all the praise that is his due, and every means of pleasing him has been studied. You know what I have written to you concerning

him, with respect to the interviews I have had with him, and the inclination I feel to oblige him in what I knew were his wishes. I took the liberty of intimating to him, when he was at Madrid, and since he joined the army, what appeared to me proper for him to know, and I have neglected no opportunity of showing him my true and sincere attachment. If, after such conduct I had not the honour of obtaining his favourable opinion, it would be indeed my misfortune, but I must not omit adding, that he approved of my frankness towards him, for which he was often pleased to thank me, and I have his letters to prove it; which I will send you, if you wish it. It is said, that the greater part of his domestics are tired of this country, and that as they wish him to live long, being so good a master, they would prefer seeing him at the Palais Royal, or the opera, than in dangers to which his Royal Highness so freely exposes himself. I am just informed that he will be here on the 15th instant, and several relays of horses are preparing to meet him twenty-two leagues from this, which he purposes to be one day's journey.

LETTER CXX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 19th, 1708.

The Duke of Orleans arrived here on Thursday last. I was in some uncertainty respecting this journey, because we had heard that his Royal Highness was going direct to Paris, without coming to Madrid, and I was quite sorry for it, because it was neither good for himself, their Catholic Majesties, nor their service. As this Prince does me the justice to believe, that I have it as much at heart as I ought to have, and that I have the honour of being attached to his person, he had the goodness to empower M. de Besons to speak to me, as from himself, assigning the reasons which rendered him uncertain as to taking leave of the King and Queen, or going to France without doing so. His reasons surprised me much, and as they had no foundation, it was easy to refute them; I therefore instantly begged M. de Besons' assistance, to determine this Prince by his representations to visit our court in his way to France. The cause of all this shyness was his having received an intimation, of its having been reported at Paris, that he had had a violent quarrel with the King of Spain, because he wished to make love to the Queen. I believe nothing

was ever more destitute of truth than the above malicious report, for this Prince had neither the desire, or gave the least appearance of it. He must have very mischievous enemies, and we ought to be very much upon our guard, in future, against what may be said in disparagement of his Royal Highness, since, in order to injure him, this complete romance has been invented; he has always behaved to the Queen with proper respect, and which she obtains by her modest, and at the same time commanding demeanour. The King, as well as myself, are usually in her room when the Prince pays his visits, and he converses with their Majesties sometimes on business, sometimes on agreeable trifles, and always with a modesty and politeness every way worthy of his station. Their Majesties are very glad to see him, and it appears to me that the satisfaction is mutual. Such, Madam, is a very faithful account of this matter; which will enable you to judge to what lengths wickedness can go. I think the Prince will leave us towards the end of the week, after arranging a plan for the next campaign, and seeing himself that nothing is wanting for his satisfaction, and which may enable him to continue gathering laurels over the enemy, and happily terminate the Spanish part of the contest. I wish there was as much unanimity amongst the generals in Flanders as there is at this court, things would certainly go on

better. The Duchess of Burgundy has apologized for you to the Queen, in consequence of your not writing, which was owing to a violent cold and bad eyes. Though there is no danger in these complaints, they are nevertheless very troublesome; I hope I shall hear by the next post that you are rid of them, when I shall also be of the uneasiness they cause me. The moments are sure to appear long till then, as nothing is more desirable than the preservation of one, for whom I have such affectionate and respectful attachment.

LETTER CXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, Nov. 26th, 1708.

As I was in pain about your health, because the Duchess of Burgundy had written to the Queen that you had a violent cold and inflamed eyes, I was very much relieved on learning, by your letter of the 11th instant, that you were better. However melancholy you may be, I always like to read what comes from you, and it is a comfort to know that you wish their Catholic Majesties to be as happy as they deserve to be. I am not surprised at the King being so much affected at so fine a conquest as that of Lisle,

being lost in sight of so powerful an army, and which he had ordered several times to succour it, in order to keep his word with Marshal de Boufflers, to whom he had made this promise. It is impossible to know this great Prince, and the elevation of his mind, not to believe that he sensibly feels the disobedience to his orders, and it is only his fortitude and submission to the will of Providence, which can support him under such an event. In saying that you dare not utter what you fear in such a crisis, it is intimating more than enough to freeze my heart. But do they maturely think with you of the possible consequence of violent decisions? Are they not aware of their frightful nature, and would they be so depraved as to shut their eyes against seeing or endeavouring to prevent them? No, Madam, that is impossible, and I never should pardon myself if I committed such an error. The Duke of Orleans, who left us this morning, will sift this matter to the bottom with the King, and it cannot enter into his mind, whatever may be the rage for peace, that it should be purchased so dearly as by the ruin of France. The misunderstanding between the Duke de Vendome, and Marshal de Berwick, is a very unhappy circumstance, and I should not presume, at such a distance, to say what I think upon this subject; but I cannot help confiding to you, that princes who are recommended to be subordinate generals, cut a very

sorry figure, since they bear the blame of misfortunes, without having the merit of success attributed to them. I have seen the same thing happen in this country, and it is certain that they cause great embarrassments when they are not the masters of their own actions.

I think that the Duke of Orleans goes away perfectly satisfied: he has himself seen, that important objects are only to be attained by a patience and zeal not possessed by every one. Their Catholic Majesties and his Royal Highness embraced each other affectionately, and I am also convinced that the latter honours me with his friendship, at least as far as assurances go. The Queen is very well; our little Prince has cut another tooth, and it is thought he is about having two or three more. The King of Spain was informed yesterday that a tower of some importance for the preservation of Tortosa, had been surprised. The Moors having experienced a vigorous repulse at Ceuta, and the commander of the place having sprung some mines, which killed a prodigious number of these unfortunate beings; it is also stated that the greatest part of the works which had been taken from us were re-captured, and that if we had been a little stronger in cavalry, they would have been compelled to raise this long siege. The Prince of the Caimaquites, under the name of the *Chevalier Tartare*, who was so well instructed by the late

M. de Meaux in the truths of our religion, did his duty extremely well. Happy is he, Madam, who has a perfect sense of it, and who is always guided by its dictates! It is this which I believe, Madam, supports you in the midst of all your sufferings.

LETTER CXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 2d, 1708.

SINCE you think, Madam, that the citadel of Lisle will experience the same fate as the town, although Marshal de Boufflers does not defend it less courageously, there is nothing to be added, except that I cannot comprehend the reason of such a circumstance, for it cannot enter into my conception that our army will look on to see everything lost, and suffer the passage of all sorts of warlike stores and provisions, unless there be something mysterious in it, or that God is pleased to blind every one. Nothing appears to me more cruel, than to have concealed the truth from the King during the whole of the campaign, which, you say is the fact, because his Majesty, from the uncertain position in which he was placed, could not give his orders with the same precision as he

would have done, had he been able to see where the mismanagement originated. It is to be hoped that M. de Vendome, being at length without a rival, will redouble his exertions to remedy the past, and that the Duke of Burgundy, now that he is unattended by Marshal de Berwick, who is always opposed in sentiment to M. de Vendome, will find himself at greater liberty, and his mind more at ease. Is it true that this Prince having had such a severe attack of the gout as to be visited by every one, even to the King of England, M. de Berwick carried his resentment so far as not to follow the example? I think his enemies circulate this report, to make it be believed that he is a mere devotee and not a real christian.

The Duke of Orleans will represent to the King all the dreadful misfortunes, which would probably happen to France as well as Spain, if their Catholic Majesties are abandoned. The reasons which his Royal Highness will alledge, are so well founded and so strong, that I have no doubt of their influence upon the King's mind and heart. I conjure you to recall to mind the past, when you were told that all would be lost, if peace was not made by the sacrifice of the King of Spain, that there was a scarcity of money, and that everything was going to ruin. Four years, however, have elapsed since this took place, and you have had formidable armies, which have not been visited by famine. Had it

not been for the fortitude of the King, in resisting such pernicious counsels, and your sincere attachment to his glory, the league would have given us the law, and we should have been humbled to such a degree by it, as to lose the finest jewels of the crown. I am very glad that you have seen Marshal de Villeroi, and that you are better satisfied with him, from his confidence and friendship for you, at which I am not surprised, as I wrote to you that I knew the real esteem he had for you, and that no person was better qualified than himself to appreciate your virtues and great worth. He could not help speaking of them to M. d'Aubigny; his doing justice to your merits, and being a very honest man, is not the only good quality he possesses, since he adds that of being sincerely attached to the King's person and the good of the state.

The sensibility evinced by the Duchess of Burgundy, at once afflicts and charms me; a sensation which you may easily conceive, in a servant like me, who is not I think less attached to her than yourself. If you cannot tell me something more about her, you will doubtless wish me to fancy all that you would have the goodness to tell me, if I had a personal interview with you in the dark room at Marly; and although I might have the fever it would not prevent me from enjoying the pleasure of finding

myself in company with one whom I most honour upon earth.

LETTER CXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 6th, 1708.

The Marquis de Santa Cruz, a Spanish grandee and a loyal subject, has arrived from Alicant, with the news of the capture of that city, after a siege of only three days from the trenches being opened, and with a trifling loss. The Chevalier d'Asfeld, who has conducted this siege very ably, will satisfy himself with blockading the castle, because of its too strong position, which would render success against it doubtful, and asserting that it will fall of itself, it being impossible for the garrison to receive succour either by land or sea. The people testified great joy at the event, and all the grandees eagerly hastened to the palace to show their exultation. This capture and that of Denia, completes the subjection of the kingdom of Valencia.

The King sends a courier on purpose to the Duke of Alba, in order that he may inform his Majesty of this agreeable news. I doubt not, Madam, but it will give you as much pleasure as

it does to us here, and we have now only to press the Archduke more closely in that part of Catalonia which he still occupies. In order to accomplish this object, the Duke de Noailles will contribute much to it, if he is provided with the means; and in truth nothing is of greater consequence than to finish the war in these parts, that we may afterwards be enabled to make a suitable peace, which is no difficult task, provided you exert yourselves ever so little on your side. Would to God this had taken place sooner! we should not be in our present predicament, while we might enjoy that tranquillity to which we aspire, but which we never can have reason to expect, if we do not save our honour.

LETTER CXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 9th, 1708.

Although I did myself the honour of writing to you, a few days ago, by a courier whom the King despatched to the Duke of Alba, I do so to-day, because I have since received your letter of the 25th ultimo, which fills me with the most grateful emotions, for all the kindness and confidence with

which you have been pleased to address me. The subjects upon which you have touched, with so much delicacy and truth, have but too well satisfied my curiosity, and I shall not enter with you, Madam, into unnecessary details; but I have the honour to tell you that you make me more than ever admire the magnanimity and fortitude of the King, and pity him for his orders being so badly executed by persons who are, nevertheless, neither deficient in merit or good intentions. It would be, in truth, an irresistible fatality, if we did not reflect that all this is the will of God. It is, doubtless, from such considerations that you are enabled to sustain present misfortunes, and bear the apprehension of future evils, and I could sincerely wish to be able to follow your example. You afford me, however, a ray of hope by the information that the Duke of Bavaria has made an attempt upon Brussels, and that the Duke de Vendome wishes to force the lines of Prince Eugene's position, to which the King immediately consented. This second attempt if ably executed, would amply compensate all the successes obtained over us by the enemy, and might be attended with more advantageous results than we could have presumed to hope for at the beginning of the campaign. The capture of Brussels would also be a very important blow; but I fear lest these two attempts have not been crowned with the success which we wish for, since nothing has as yet

transpired to that effect, and it appears to me, that we should be in possession of the news before now, if the result had been favourable.

When the cities of Ghent and Bruges returned to their duty, it was considered as a circumstance of great moment, and the Count de Bergeyeck was always for preserving them, but I see that Marshal de Berwick is of a different opinion. It is not the first time that they have differed in their views, and one cannot yet decide who is in the right. Each may have more or less capacious plans, of more easy or difficult execution, and prudent characters are generally governed in their measures by circumstances, when fortune does not seem to smile upon them; however, nothing is so vexing, or more lamentable, than the diversity of opinions upon affairs of such consequence, and it is easy to imagine the example set by M. de Vendome and M. de Berwick is the cause of all that has taken place. We, therefore, may well rejoice that they are separated. The insolent censures cast upon a prince so respectable as the Duke of Burgundy, would on several accounts deserve exemplary chastisement, and nothing appears to me more dangerous than court cabals, when they vent their venom against sovereigns. If persons composing them had a real zeal for the welfare of the state and the King, they would warn him of what they believe to be inimical to his service, in a bold but respectful

manner, and support in public, whatever could promote his glory, instead of censuring all his measures without knowing the reasons he had for adopting them. How is it, Madam, when the question at issue is about a king they wish to dethrone, another whose power they wish to undermine, in short, the most momentous objects on earth, that they should bring M. de Cambrai, the jesuits, the free thinkers, and the Jansenists into the dispute? It would be much better to think only of the war, conquering the enemy, and in so doing obey the will of God in supporting so just a cause. I think the Duchess of Burgundy must be of my opinion, and that she bears impatiently the injustice done to the Duke her husband. You may exercise your own discretion, with respect to showing the King the memorial concerning the proceedings with the Duke of Orleans. I could wish this Prince showed as much firmness to his servants, as he does at the head of the army, they would not then run the risk of telling him stories, which it would be better for his Royal Highness not to listen to, nor would they be so well acquainted with his sentiments as they are, from his want of prudence in speaking in their presence, which they often publish, contrary to the wishes of their master; for, possessing his sense and goodness, I know that he repents when certain expressions have escaped him, which he acknowledges are unseasonable. I beg of you,

however, whatever protestations he may have made to their Catholic Majesties, the ambassador and myself, to be satisfied with him, to watch in some measure his proceedings, and to do me the honour of informing me, whether I continue to possess some share in the friendship which he frequently professed he had for me, and which I certainly wish to merit. So long as I know that the Duke of Savoy's conduct makes the two Princesses, his daughters, unhappy, I shall entertain doubts of his devotion.. It is, however, certain that his Royal Highness lives upon much better terms with his mother at present, than he has done since the Portuguese marriage has been broken off; at which Madame Royal testified her joy to the Queen, which was more lively, she said, because he shows the Duchess of Savoy great friendship. These are good beginnings, but not enough. I wish you, Madam, to have cause for tranquillity, and that you may not always have occasion to summon your virtue to your aid, to enable you to bear up against so much suffering as you have experienced for many years; if that should take place, I shall have reason to be well satisfied with myself.

LETTER CXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 17th, 1708.

I know not, Madam, what purpose it can answer to invent such fables as the one I had the honour of sending you respecting the Queen of Spain and the Duke of Orleans; they are so vulgar and so untrue, that they must cover those who circulate them with shame; but I am nevertheless astonished, that they have not endeavoured to get them conveyed to the King and the Duchess of Burgundy, for probably their object was malignant. I imagine that it must be some wretch of a servant to his Royal Highness, who was afraid of returning to Madrid, or some other person, who wished to see the Prince in France, and who thought of this fine expedient, to make him go there direct, without coming to take leave of their Catholic Majesties. Two or three persons, however, have been mentioned to me, as having circulated this report at Versailles; but I think it is better to drop it, than to revive the subject again by naming them. Nothing can be more ridiculous than this gossipping, which will, however, I apprehend, be repeated. How

much better to occupy our minds with other things, since we have but too many of importance which ought to engross all our attention. The end of this camp[illegible] to me still more surprising than all t[illegible]ceded it, and what you have done me the [illegible]of stating could not have been expected. [illegible]rtain that we must believe ourselves Christ[illegible] not to give way to despair, on seeing every [illegible] which the enemy has been suffered to do without meeting any obstacle. How much our kings and princesses are to be pitied, on seeing themselves exposed to so many deplorable events, and such grievous consequences for the future, by a tissue of errors, which they might have avoided, or at least remedied and Marshal de Boufflers extricated from his glorious perils, by relieving him, or preventing the enemy from receiving supplies. Since we have yet more than a hundred thousand men, we must not lose all hope. You console me when you say, that the next campaign must assume a new aspect, and that no preparation is to be neglected this winter, which is worthy of the King's courage and fortitude. His conduct is, indeed, admirable and entitles him to a daily increasing esteem but I differ from you as to its strengthening my respectful attachment for him, because I already feel that I am wholly devoted to his Majesty, and

for anything, it ought not to be at your health being better, but at the indifference which you evince for the continuance of your life. Have you forgotten that it is your duty to preserve it, for those to whom it is as useful as it is agreeable, and who are deeply interested for you. Cease, then, I conjure you, to indulge such improper thoughts, or do not take it amiss, if I make use of the harshest terms of reproach for your ingratitude; but I am incapable of employing any such, where you are concerned, and my respectful attachment to you can only cease with existence.

P.S. As I believe that the King of Spain and the ambassador inform his Majesty, that Count de Staremberg, with five thousand men and several bodies of miquelets, endeavoured to surprise Tortosa, but without success, I shall abstain from giving you the particulars, and only observe, that we owe the good fortune of preserving this important place to the great valour of the French and Spanish troops composing its garrison, although not numerous. The enemy lost more than five hundred men, in killed and wounded, and we about sixty. This would have been a serious loss, and which had cost the Duke of Orleans so many glorious efforts to obtain, had it been taken by surprise. The Catalonians calculated with great certainty on the success of the attack.

LETTER CXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 21st, 1706.

WHAT can I say, Madam, in reply to yours of the 9th instant, in which you so justly describe all the errors of the late campaign, and those which you predict will occur in future! If so numerous an army as that of the King's is destined only to act inefficiently, and almost always at random, you have but too much reason to fear everything; but allow me to observe, that it is wrong to have so bad an opinion of troops, and their commanding officers, as to believe that everything cannot be rectified, when serious efforts are made to give them another form, and when there is no want of supplies and other requisites; it therefore betrays a want of courage to despair, and to imagine that you are obliged to abandon everything. I hope also that such a trait will never appear in history, and that a series of such great actions as the King has performed, will not be tarnished by an ignominious peace; and it seems to me, that those who recommend it to be purchased so dearly, deserve to be listened to with indignation. In fact, these are most probably igno-

ble wretches and disloyal subjects; for it is certain if Spain is abandoned by treaty, a thing unheard of, and to which his Catholic Majesty would rather sacrifice his life than consent, France would afterwards become the victim of so great an error; since the league, by receiving such an accession of power as this great monarchy must add to it, would be enabled to dictate the law. The Emperor already makes Italy feel his iron yoke; but if the Pope had been assisted with the trifling succour which he earnestly sued for, a very powerful diversion might have been made, and the kingdom of Naples would probably have also returned to its allegiance to the Catholic King, while many of the Italian Princes would also have espoused our cause. In such a case, the Archduke would have been greatly embarrassed, and it might have thus been very easy to drive him from a country which he is completely ruining, while he would have lost all hope of rendering himself master of this part of the continent. In short, Madam, it is certain that the measures which have been adopted, since the siege of Turin commenced, have ruined everything in that quarter, and that our affairs in Flanders have not been more auspicious. The best plan to put an end to all clamour, and to silence those who presume to speak so indignantly, would be to appear courageous, in boldly and constantly supporting the good cause, and that the King, who is

always so much inclined to the side of goodness and clemency, should show on some occasions a necessary severity, which would repress the unseasonable liberties, that are taken at court and in his armies, and which would excite a sentiment of awe and respect for the best of masters, when it appears, as it does now, that these impressions are losing ground. It must be confessed that I am very bold thus to address you, but I take this liberty, because I feel that I could willingly sacrifice my life for his Majesty to be as well served as he deserves, and which would consequently make him happier.

I have no doubt but the interview of our Princes with the King was less agreeable than we could have wished; and certainly the Duke of Burgundy is greatly to be pitied, as well as the Duchess. All the chagrin of the former will soon disappear, if exertions are made this winter, as you give me reason to expect, to re-establish the army, and to give a new aspect to affairs. Our enemies have too long enjoyed their good fortune for us not to have it in our turn; but once more, Madam, let us neglect nothing to obtain it.. I remember while I was at Fontainebleau during the siege of Philisbourg, when France was so rich, and did not want for good generals, there was also a cry of despair, and it was said that all was lost. The ladies complained bitterly, as if they feared being reduced to poverty, and the men lamented the

dismal situation to which the kingdom was fast hastening. However, both the former and the latter continued to play very high, to keep extravagant tables; and the women, after weeping over the dangers to which the soldiers were exposed, in a moment thought only of their toilets, and laughed at the most trivial joke. However, a number of years have since elapsed, in which both adversity and good fortune have been well borne; the wisest plan, therefore, is to pay little attention to what is said, and to pursue one's course with tranquillity.

I am very much astonished that M. de Vendome is returning, which I should not be if Prince Eugene and Marlborough were quiet in their cantonments; but that he wishes to go and enjoy himself at Anet, while the enemy is in the field, is to me quite unaccountable. If Marshal de Berwick so strenuously advised the keeping our strong places, and abandoning the Scheldt, he must have begun by securing Lisle, which would have been the surest way of preserving the frontiers from incursions. You have nothing to fear as to the joy he might feel, on seeing his prophecies accomplished, for his mind is too delicate to allow him to rejoice at another's misfortune, and he is too worthy a man to possess feelings so hostile to what he owes for the King's favours, and those of his Catholic Majesty.

I am very glad that the Duke of Orleans ap-

pears satisfied with me, having done all I coul
to merit the honour of his good opinion, and
shall continue to entertain a sincere and respectf
attachment for his Royal Highness. I think h
will have less d reducing the Archduk
in Barcelona, and , in making him quit
than in reconciling chess of Burgundy a
Madame, as both wo Princesses imagi
they are in the right; ut such estrangemen
are very unpleasant, and family union is at lea
very desirable in times of public calamity. T
Queen could very much wish her sister and M
dame to be upon amicable terms, for her Majes
is ever averse to enmities. So many deat
amongst persons of rank must cause a gre
degree of melancholy. I fear much for the Princ
as the Princess informed me a week ago that
was very sorry at being unable to write to m
owing to his being so unwell. He has never
a moment ceased to show me kindness on eve
occasion, and I should be very much grieved
his loss. As the Prince de Conti is younger a
more cheerful, there is less reason to be appr
hensive on his account; the Duke de Gramo
would, I think, have acted more wisely, if he h
not taken his wife with him to Versailles a
Marly, without first ascertaining whether t
King disapproved of it, as he would thus ha

will probably repent of it when his love cools. I did not expect that any daughter of Madame de Noailles would become a nun, but I hope she will be satisfied with her lot, since she might have followed the example of her sisters. The late lamented Marshal, and their mother, have left them at full liberty to pursue the line of life they prefer, for which reasonable and affectionate conduct they cannot be too much praised.

LETTER CXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 30th, 1708.

NEITHER the last post, nor the return of the courier extraordinary, have brought me letters from you, but the Queen has done me the honour of showing me the one she has received from you, by which it appears you were in great trouble. This does not surprise me, from your facilities for observing every passing event, and from the general dejection which surrounds you. I, however, except the principal character in this drama; I need not name the King: we hear that he always shows fortitude, and is the only one who is invincible amidst the misfortunes which assail him, as well as against those which are an-

ticipated, and which serve only to arm him with additional courage. A character like his, is, indeed, admirable in every respect; but not the less amiable. I expect, Madam, that you will do me the honour of communicating to me something of the interview which has taken place between the Duke of Burgundy, his Majesty, and the Duchess of Burgundy. This Princess is suffering from many different sensations, and would doubtless feel their effects still more sensibly if she had not a friend to whom she can unbosom her griefs like yourself, who affectionately participates in them, and who so well knows how to apply an effectual remedy. I am sure, Madam, you will not have been able to refrain from tears on seeing Marshal de Boufflers again; too much cannot be done for such a character, and the King's generosity is highly commended for the gracious mark of favour he has conferred on the Marshal. The brilliant example set by this officer in his brave defence of Lisle should stimulate others, and at the same time excite the blush of shame, if honour be yet nothing more than an empty word. I hope however, that it will revive, and that our nation which formerly acquired so much esteem, will in future, resume its pristine character, remembering that it ought to show heroic virtue in order to gratify the sovereign who governs it. We have nothing new here; but everything is preparing for the approaching campaign. The Queen is

well, and I am devoted to you as usual. I have a violent cold, which makes me cough all the night; but I hope it will quit me sooner than that which I had while with you at Marly. The Duchess of Mantua's misfortune excites much compassion, and the patience and resignatio with which she sustains it, increases this feeling still more in her behalf. Letters received here state that Marshal de Tessé was seriously indisposed. I take the liberty, Madam, of addressing a letter to your care for the Queen of England, feeling no longer scrupulous in giving you commissions, since you execute them as punctually as if you were obliged to do it, and it is very convenient to me. You say nothing more to me of the Duke de Noailles. Will you permit the Marshal's lady to absent herself from court, and be overwhelmed with grief? Paris is not the place for her.

LETTER CXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 9th, 1708.

I BEG of you not to lose your patience, if I recur to a matter on which you formerly started some difficulties. I have several reasons for it,

and however you may think of our obligations to the Duke of Orleans, for his services in Spain, you will conceive as well as myself, that I can hardly dispense with endeavouring to meet his wishes. As to the title which his Royal Highness has requested for Madame de Sery he feels more interest about it than ever, and I am sure that this court cannot give him a mark of its gratitude, which will afford him greater pleasure than by soliciting the conclusion of the affair. Allow me then, Madam, to entreat you would enter into his feelings on this occasion. We most assuredly owe to his courage, foresight, and firmness, the important captures of Lerida and Tortosa; and it is necessary to stimulate him with fresh ardour for the ensuing campaign. These are powerful reasons, and I know not whether, on certain occasions, it is not politic to forget the object of a favour, when he who solicits it deserves infinitely more. I remain ever, with the most respectful attachment, Madam, your very humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 7th, 1709.

I DO not think it possible, Madam, that a handsomer letter was ever written than the last with

which you honoured me, and I know only yourself capable of thinking so piously, correctly, and nobly, as well as expressing your thoughts so happily. I shall not think of answering it word for word, as by doing so, I should have cause to blush at myself, and disincline you, perhaps, to continue a correspondence with one who only presumes to flatter herself that she appreciates all your worth, without being able to copy you, except at too great a distance, to cherish the vain desire of continuing so delightful an intercourse as yours, but which, however, I find it impossible to live without. I shall now have the honour of observing to you, that our King is worthy of admiration, and of all our affection, but at the same time of compassion, to find himself alone in wishing to act well without being seconded; that the Duchess of Burgundy causes me to shed tears, when I reflect on all that her too susceptible heart, and the generosity, grandeur and delicacy of her disposition expose her to suffer, and that I am ready to expire of grief, when I see you feeling more than even themselves the weight of their just sorrows! The malady of the Duchess does not make me less uneasy than yourself, and it is surprising that this swelling should have reached to one side of her bosom. What says M. Fagon to it, Madam? Would he not advise the baths of Bourbon, or some others of the same kind? Complaints of this nature are not easily

cured when not attended to in time; but her youth should make us hope for the best. I humbly beg you, Madam, to have the goodness to inform me of everything relative to her health, which is so dear to me. The Queen feels more on her account than for herself: she is often the subject of her Majesty's conversation with me: they are indeed two wonderful Princesses. The Queen is now in excellent health. The court is very full from the number of officers to whom the Duke of Orleans has given permission to come here and pass the winter, but I should greatly prefer seeing them in their quarters, and should feel still more at my ease, if M. de Besons had remained at the head of the armies till his Royal Highness returned; for the enemy are not asleep in Catalonia, and they will always be attempting something new. Every body, Madam, is too fond of going to Paris, except however, myself, for I assure you, I have no inclination to do so. I believe you would be sorry to see me there, which is a proof of your kindness and attachment to their Catholic Majesties, whose virtue shines with greater splendour as misfortunes assail them. If you render justice to them, they will do the same to you, and I protest to you that no one can have greater confidence or more friendship and esteem for you than the King and Queen.

LETTER CXXX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 14th, 1709.

We have had, Madam, more snow and frost for some days past, than have occurred in the memory of the oldest inhabitants of Madrid. This is thought to have prevented the arrival of the post last week, which is very unpleasant, for although no news is expected, we are always anxious to hear how the royal family and our friends are. Since you did me the honour of writing to me respecting the Duchess of Burgundy's complaint, I have been very uneasy, and I am impatiently expecting what M. Mareschal, whom you said was to see her, will have thought of it, as well as M. Fagon's opinion. I am also uneasy about the violent cold you had, and what makes me still more sorry is, that probably we shall not have our letters till the couriers can travel, so that we shall know nothing of the occurrences in Flanders. It is said, the Catalonians are greatly in want of provisions, that money is scarce with them, that many of them see their error, and perceive that they have accelerated their ruin by changing masters; it is also added that the Portuguese are not much more at their ease. As to other

matters, nothing of great importance has occurred in this country, except it be the extremity to which one of the civil officers of the King's household, is reduced, the Count de Benaventa not being expected yesterday evening to survive the night; however, this morning he was considerably better, though still in great danger. Their Majesties would, with great reason, be very sorry to lose him, because he is truly attached to them, and has never been concerned in any cabal, or intrigue, at variance with the duty of a good and faithful subject; he is, moreover, of a distinguished family, and acquits himself very well of the duty of grand chamberlain, which has more privileges attached to it than the office of the Duke de Bouillon. You will, doubtless, think it extraordinary that his wife, and three daughters, one of whom is married, but all three able to leave their houses, have not taken the trouble to pay him a visit in the palace, where he resides: this will be no great proof to you of the affection that prevails amongst the members of some families; and indeed it is very rare to meet with relations who care much about each other; we should not, therefore, be astonished if they have no love for strangers. Cardinal Portocarero came last night at nine o'clock, after the extreme unction had been administered to the Count, in order to give absolution and his benediction, notwithstanding his age and the coldness of the weather; and

it is but doing him justice to say, that he acquitted himself extremely well of these archiepiscopal duties.

We shall have a fine ceremony in the month of March, or sooner, if possible, when all the kingdoms will take the oath, acknowledging the Prince of Asturias as the real successor to the present King. I think the ambassador is to inform the King to day, of the manner in which this ceremony ought to be performed. I am appointed to the honour of holding the Prince in my arms, when all the deputies come to take their oath. It is desirable, Madam, to add to the pleasures of this day, that we should know that you are more tranquil in your court. The Prince has cut his sixth tooth as happily as the others. The Queen is perfectly well at present. Such is all the news I can give you, except however adding my entreaties that you take good care not to be surprised by a cabal, which is certainly known to act in that spirit, as this would be very pernicious. The ambassador is prudent, zealous, and loyal, and he should be referred to for everything, for he certainly will not deceive, and has no other interest than that of doing his duty. For my own part, Madam, I flatter myself that you know my heart, which will be devoted to you to the last moment of my life.

LETTER CXXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, Jan. 17th, 1709.

The post, which ought to have arrived last week, only reached this yesterday, and I expect the next will bring us an account of the capture of Ghent and Bruges by the enemy, since nothing can prevent it, our army having retired into winter quarters. We must no longer think, Madam, of so many misfortunes, since the greatest men have experienced them; and the most formidable nations have not been exempt from errors. But all may be effaced by better conduct in future; and, perhaps, in the next campaign our enemies may see, that the French in general are neither deficient in courage or zeal to the service of their country, and that they perform their duty when they are well commanded.

I confess, Madam, it is not easy to foresee when and how all this state of uncertainty will be removed, our knowledge being too confined to penetrate into futurity, God alone can shew it to us, and lead us through thorny paths, to where we shall afterwards find consolation.

Marshal de Boufflers will re-establish order where he is going, or it will be very unfortunate.

I am in great uneasiness for the Prince; you know better than any one, Madam, the honour he has always done me, and how much I am indebted to him. The death of the Prince de Conti would be much regretted, as he possesses so many estimable qualities; and it appears to me, that every one ought to be interested in the lives of the members of a family so dear to us. You have sent me no more news of the Duchess of Burgundy, since you wrote to tell me her tumour had increased so very much, which makes me conclude that it is not found dangerous. If our Princess gives way to grief, and has no resource in her courage, I shall be very apprehensive for her health: she is too young to despair of seeing all things change for the better; the Queen, who is not less susceptible, does not suffer herself to be dejected. You will oblige her very much in letting her have a good physician, for if the King's becomes ill, their Majesties and the Prince would be in an awkward predicament. I write to-day to M. Clement, and Madame de la Salle, to come here towards the end of March, because the Queen's confinement will probably take place in April. As the Duchess of Burgundy has no occasion for them, nothing, I think, will prevent their undertaking the journey. At length, Madam, we have lost poor Count de Benaventa, who is very much regretted because of his fidelity and attachment to his Majesty. I hope that his

successor may have as much, and may suit his Majesty as well; the Count was, besides, very cheerful, which is not characteristic of his nation; and his conversation was so amusing, that it did not fail to enliven their Majesties, to whom, you know, courtiers of this description are necessary. Although you appear to have a great contempt for life, I cannot have sufficient complaisance to agree with you, that you ought not to endeavour to preserve it many years, at least as long as a relation of a little Irish woman, whom I have in my service, who, it is said, died four days ago at the age of a hundred and fourteen. It is allowed by every one at Madrid, that the Marquis de Mansera is a hundred; therefore, Madam, expect if you please to live as long as these people, who have preserved the same vivacity they had formerly.

January 21st.

The King has just appointed the Duke of Alba to the office of grand cup bearer, lately occupied by the Count de Benaventa, upon which I congratulate you, and I think it will give pleasure to his Majesty, since he has testified more than once, that he honours the Duke with his esteem and good opinion. As this place has had several competitors of high birth, and for fidelity to the King, their master, it ought to enhance the value of the gift; and I doubt not but it will afford

great satisfaction, but his Catholic Majesty has been pleased to give the preference to his ambassador, before the other lords. I may even add, that there is one of them, for whom the King of Spain has always had a partiality, because he loves him personally, and interferes with nothing which he has to do, being an enemy to everything which is called cabal. Would to God, Madam, that you could take a nearer view of this court! You would see those who are influenced by their passions, and those who would wish to act only a just and reasonable part. You are imbued with the last named principles, and would, I am convinced, heartily despise those people who endeavour only to deceive and ruin everything. I refrain from speaking more explicitly upon the subject, on account of its very delicate nature.

LETTER CXXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, January 28th, 1709.

Although I have all the confidence which I ought to have in your goodness, Madam, I shall not fail to check the vivacity with which I have been in the habit of writing to you, as to what concerns the

interests of their Catholic Majesties, since it would only grieve you, and be of no service to me. If, however, I had to plead this cause in a personal interview, it appears to me that I should have strong reasons to oppose to yours, and that you would acknowledge it to be a long time since you had lost all hope of the possibility of doing what has since been done. If the finances and the war in Flanders had been managed as they ought to have been, we should be in a better situation at the present moment than our enemies, and should the best measures be adopted even now, the evil would not be without a remedy. It is the ill success of the late campaigns which occasions the scarcity of money, but it would soon reappear in case vigour was once more displayed, and we had a successful battle. The example of Marshal de Boufflers, who was not succoured, notwithstanding the long defence he made, is probably the reason that Count de la Motte thought it right immediately to capitulate, with the troops which he commanded. I remember, Madam, your doing me the honour of intimating to me your fears lest this should happen to him. It is a great pity that what the Pope applied for has not been sent, because it would have made a powerful diversion in Italy, as well as prevented his Holiness from being reconciled to the Emperor, and the latter from sending fresh succours to the Archduke, besides placing the Duke of Savoy between two

fires, so as probably to have prevented him from making fresh incursions into France.

It is no longer against the Duke of Burgundy that the officers take the liberty of declaiming, all their spleen being now directed against the Duke de Vendome; but it appears to me, they would have done better not to have railed against either, and to have caused quarrels, by exciting a party spirit.

It is true, Madam, that Marshal de Villeroi has only formed too good a judgment of what has taken place; however, could he believe in all that has been done, and if it had not been done, would not the campaign have been glorious?

The King of Spain, has been much affected at the death of the lady of Marshal de la Motte, and I was very glad to see his Majesty evince such feelings for his governess, who richly merited them. The Duchess de Ventadour will equally well discharge the duties of this place.

The reconciliation of the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame ought to be lasting, there being nothing in fact for them to quarrel about; meantime, I wish for this event more than I expect it. I am not surprised that M. de Besons gives the Queen the praises which are due to her, in that rigid manner which I know he possesses; but I should not have so good an opinion of him as I have, had he paid attention to my face, which is such that it ought not to be remembered by any one.

Since the sicknesses of M. le Prince, and the Prince de Conti, are prolonged, one may well indulge in hope, after they have been at the last extremity.

You expect, Madam, a visit from an agreeable companion, the Princess de Vaudemont, possessing so much good sense and politeness as she does. I believe she must be sometimes much astonished at the manners of the present day, so different from her own, but which she will not, certainly, perceive at your house. From the letters which she has done me the honour of writing to me relative to you, it appears to me that she was delighted with them. I have received by this post letters from the Duchesses of Mantua and Elbœuf, which testify their satisfaction at the kindnesses of the Catholic King. This Princess ought certainly to have better fortune henceforward than she has had up to the present time; she will be a great ornament at Marly. I am very glad that she is a little better, for accidents of this nature never fail to cause alarm for some time.

It would be a pity should poor little Madame de Courcillon miscarry; but, perhaps, it will turn out better than Clement expects.

The new assurances you give me, Madam, of the honour of your friendship were almost superfluous, since I am convinced you will always continue it to me, and I rely upon nothing so firmly as that.

P.S. We have nothing new at court here, except that the Prince of Asturias has cut a seventh tooth, and is about to cut the eighth, since his gums are much swollen.

LETTER CXXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 1st, 1709.

I HAVE seen some accounts from Rome, Madam, stating that the Pope obstinately persists in not consenting to what the Germans require of him with arms in their hands, and to their sending troops to exercise every severity upon the Holy Father himself, and the sacred college; that in such an extreme case he will remain firm, and retire to Avignon; that the French and Spanish ministers will, consequently, also come to the resolution of withdrawing, if they can; for the Germans would not be sorry to get hold of them, which certainly places them in a very awkward position. That of Cardinal de la Tremoille is still more so, because he is over head and ears in debt, from the necessity of supporting his official dignity, and the brutes with whom he would have to deal, or the insolent populace which they would excite against him, to show him disrespect and abuse him. I do assure you, Madam, that the thoughts of this makes me

pass many unpleasant hours. I have, besides nephews and a niece whom I tenderly love, who would be much exposed; this same niece, whose mother was so dear to me, whom I brought up with the same affection as the late Duchess de Chastillon, and whose interests I have nevertheless completely neglected, although it depended only upon myself to promote them: this overstrained moderation renders her unhappy, and has been of no service to me here, nor where you are; for certainly no body cares about it, nor for the oppression under which I struggle in consequence of the bad state of my pecuniary affairs, but of which I refrain from giving you the particulars. I lose my sight at intervals, and I have besides other sources of chagrin and disgust, upon which I shall also be silent, because you have too many of your own, for me to attempt burthening you with mine. You depict to me, Madam, in your letter of the 14th ultimo, everything in such gloomy characters, that I am unable to say any thing to it in reply; but I very much doubt whether I could be silent, if I had the honour of a personal interview with you. It would be knocking one's head against the wall to treat of the subject so far off; when no answer can be given to what is observed, it is better to leave the whole to Providence. The Marquis de Bedmar is restless and impatient at the non-arrival of troops from Dauphiny, where they will be of no use until the beginning of the cam-

paign, which is postponed in that quarter in consequence of the snow. He asserts, Madam, that these troops, joined to those under the Duke de Noailles, would capture Girona, speedily enough to give them time to return, and this without any military error; that place once in our possession, the Catalonians would no longer suffer the Archduke to remain amongst them, being already pretty well tired of him: and that after this Prince had quitted Spain, we should soon see our affairs assume a different aspect. It appears to me that he reasons very justly, and that if this measure had been adopted, we should already have experienced its good effects. But I know not whether every body would be satisfied with it in your court, where, several years ago, certain persons wanted to make a disgraceful peace, by sacrificing their Catholic Majesties, who owe everything to the fortitude, magnanimity, and affection of the King, their grandfather.

The Prince of Asturias has cut a double tooth, which makes the eighth. As he has sustained this trial without much suffering, we are in hopes that the remainder will come with the same ease; it has only made him thinner and a little less handsome, but he will recover that. The Queen is not near so corpulent as she was the first time; she does not perceive her child very much, which may doubtless be accounted for, from what occurred in the early part of her pregnancy. In

other respects, as her Majesty eats heartily, more cannot be expected from a Queen who is possessed of sensibility.

LETTER CXXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 7th, 1709.

I AM not surprised that the post which arrived this morning has brought me no letters from you, since the Duchess of Burgundy writes to the Queen, that poor Madame d' Hudicourt was at the point of death, and that your grief did not permit you to write. You have, indeed, just cause for this sorrow, as you will lose in her an old and amiable friend, with whom you were in habits of intimacy, who was devoted to you, and whom you can scarcely expect to replace; for which reasons I pity you sincerely, and participate so much the more in your grief, as I have all my life long felt a real affection for that lady. God tries your virtue in many different ways, but you know how to turn it to the best account.

The ambassador has thought it necessary to despatch a courier extraordinary to court, to ascertain more correctly the King's intentions respecting this country, and thus be enabled to adopt better measures. It would be useless, Madam,

for me to enter into these details, since you will know the object in view by his despatches, and that it is he who is empowered with everything, which is of no trifling consequence, and would be too much for any one else but himself. Meanwhile, their Catholic Majesties and this minister do not lose courage; and if on your side, proportional and mutual efforts are made to support the struggle, as is the case in this court, we may reasonably expect a successful campaign. Letters from Paris state that the Duke of Burgundy will have the command, and that Marshals de Boufflers, Harcourt, Berwick, and Matignon, will have the honour of serving under him; God grant that amongst this great number of generals, there may exist more union than there was last year with only two, and that the Prince, if unfortunately divisions should again arise, may himself take such measures as the prudence which his wisdom and good intentions will suggest to him! The Duchess of Burgundy, who has scarcely had time to breathe since his return, is soon about to experience fresh anxieties: our two Princesses certainly deserve a better fate than what they experience.

The Queen has suffered the last three days from a violent head-ache; she does not get on so well in this pregnancy as the last, although there is no reason to apprehend any danger. It is probable that our Prince will yet cut many teeth, his gums being much swollen; but he is

not less cheerful on that account. It had been thought that the ceremony of acknowledging him, as presumptive heir, could not take place until after the Queen's confinement; at which I was very sorry, because it ought already to have been performed, in consequence of the important effects expected to result from all the kingdoms taking the oath. The president of Castile, before whom all the deputies appear, yesterday said, that the ceremony would be ready by the first of April, which is all that I have to communicate of any importance. The four last days of the carnival will be concluded by as many plays, two very serious ones in Spanish, and two Italian burlettas; these will be the only amusements we have had in this palace, which has more the air of a gloomy convent than of a court. I do not think that of France is much more gay, although appearances may indicate as much from the plays which are exhibited at all times, and in all seasons. The winter has never been so severe as at present, everybody is suffering from it, and none are without inflammations or colds. I dare not flatter myself that you have not yours, and I fear more lest your health may be affected by it, than for my own, because I esteem you more than myself, nor can any thing equal my gratitude for your kindnesses.

LETTER CXXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 15th, 1709.

I WAS attacked the night before last with a dreadful cholic, accompanied with fever, which continued for four and twenty hours; but being now much relieved I shall endeavour, by taking some mild medicines, which the first physician will give me, to rid myself of the bile, which is the cause of all these complaints. You cannot be pitied more by any one than myself, on losing Madame d'Hudicourt, and your attentions to her, to the last, exhibit more and more the goodness of your heart, and the motives for being attached to you. But I could wish that such opportunities of showing what you are did not occur, for I fear lest they may affect your health, which is much dearer to me than I can express. I am very sorry to hear that the Prince de Conti gets worse, and that there is no longer any hope of preserving so estimable a man. Although you assured me that he was much better, I fear that so worn out a frame as his cannot recover sufficient strength to overcome such frequent attacks. Poor Madame de Soubise has struggled with her maladies for a great length of time,

and as she is a very deserving character, it would be a great pity if she died. The hard necessity of thus seeing our friends die around us, is truly melancholy: but it is, however, necessary to make up one's mind to it. Everything that you say to me respecting Marshal de Boufflers makes me esteem him still more, and serves only to irritate me against others, who have not less reason than he to sacrifice themselves in the King's service. I shall not have the honour of protracting this letter, because repose is prescribed to me, and as little thought as possible. My obedience, however, to this order, will not extend so far as to forget all the kindnesses with which you honour me.

P.S. I think the King will not have hesitated to give the Duchess of Mantua an apartment in the castle of Vincennes, this Princess being well deserving of his Majesty's protection.

I am very glad that the King has permitted the Duke of Orleans to give Mademoiselle de Sery a titled estate, which will procure her the name of Madame, and that we have thus got rid of that business. I do not think a greater proof on my part to give satisfaction to his Royal Highness could be shown, than in soliciting you, as I have done, for an object he had so much at heart, since you would easily conceive that it was out of my way to engage in such an affair.

LETTER CXXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, February 18th, 1709.

ALTHOUGH I did myself the honour of writing to you by the return of a courier extraordinary, which set out two days ago, I do so again to-day to inform you that I am quite rid of my cholic and fever, and that I take medicines to prevent their return if possible. The kindnesses with which you honour me, Madam, are so great and constant, that they leave me no reason to doubt your grief at my being attacked with dangerous or painful complaints; this is the reason I think it right to inform you, that those I had have left me. Chagrin is not of a healthy nature, and it requires more than one medicine to expel it. I have been informed that the Prince de Vaudemont had been at death's door during the severe cold. What trouble must not his condition have caused his wife and family! It appears that there is no person who, for a certain length of time back, has not his individual calamities joined to the public misfortunes, and the conflagration that is spread throughout Europe, would almost make me believe that the end of the world was at hand, if I did not behold the pregnancy of the

Queen. I think M. Clement and Madame de la Salle, will feel disposed to execute the King's orders, enclosed them in two of my letters, which I took the liberty of addressing to you. I wrote to tell them, that they might so contrive it, as to arrive at Madrid before the 25th of March; I, therefore, now believe them to be on the road: they will tell us plenty of news of the Duchess of Burgundy and yourself. Do me the honour, I entreat you, to inform me, with your usual sincerity, whether you are sorry at having Madame de Caylus with you, whether this lovely niece does not feel for your troubles as she ought, and as you feel them yourself. Believe me, rational relations, who become our friends, love us usually with greater affection than any one else: duty, inclination, and every species of interest bind them to us, and it is very rare to meet, in those who make a profession of friendship, the union of all these feelings. I very much regret Madame d'Hudicourt, for she appeared to me to be at all times heartily attached to you.

I hope you will not neglect to obtain from the King, some mark of favour for the children of Madame d'Hudicourt, and I intercede for one, if you please, for the eldest. I knew him very well at Rome: he possesses much intelligence, is charming in society, and appeared to me a

tached to the King. I am delighted that his Majesty was very glad at his grandson having given the Duke of Alba one of the three charges of his household, and I am persuaded that you will not have felt less pleasure, after all the kind things that you have so often told me of the Duke and his lady.

LETTER CXXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

(Without date.)

I KEEP this letter ready for a courier extraordinary, which the ambassador will despatch, but at present I do not know the day of his departure. The cause of his going is not very consoling, since it relates to the reconciliation of the Pope with the Emperor; a shameful event in itself, but accompanied with the most disgraceful circumstances for his Holiness, and of the most scandalous nature in the eyes of all true Christians, and even of heretics. The consequences of this treaty may be very disastrous, if any symptoms of fear appear, but I am well persuaded, on the contrary, that if firmness and courage are shown, which it will be absolutely necessary to do, the court of Rome will lose more than this. It is true, that one cannot weigh too well the conduct which it will be necessary

to observe towards the Pope, and it is necessary rather to follow the suggestions of reason, than the just resentment which such a proceeding occasions. What is done in cool blood is much better than when in anger; and a sensible conduct followed up with intrepidity, mortifies our enemies more than passion and invective, which usually terminate in smoke, or often give rise to fresh disputes. The King's prudence, which never forsakes him, will be of great service to his Catholic Majesty, since he will, doubtless, advise him for the best, and they will act in concert together. I cannot, however, help telling you, that the King, our master, has carried his kindness to excess, and that many have abused it. As the King of Spain and M. Amelot, will write to the King, on what the Spaniards think of the affair in question, you will be pleased to excuse me from repeating to you what you will see by their letters, so that I will only reply to your last. I wait impatiently for news of Marshal de Boufflers, for I hope that after having informed me of his pain in the breast, you will continue to give me an account of the state of his health, feeling as I do, so much interested in his preservation, from all the wonders which you tell me of him, and from the strong confirmation which we have seen of them. I can easily conceive the need which the King has for exercise, to dissipate in part his just chagrin; and as the pleasure he takes in walking,

and which is of service to his head, one cannot but regret when the weather prevents his taking it. His Catholic Majesty imitates him in everything, and feels himself indisposed from the vapours, when he cannot walk far and long enough to dissipate them. If the thaw has taken place, the King will have profited from this change to resume his usual habit, and I hope that his Majesty will no longer feel that oppression in the head, which you say was occasioned by his sedentary life.

With all due respect to our great Princess, I cannot help saying, that the King had more reason than her highness for having balls during the carnival, because it is a species of triumph for the enemy to show dejection in our misfortunes, while it appears to me much better to display the same equanimity to the public in bad as in good fortune. The cause of the Duchess of Burgundy's melancholy has a praiseworthy source, since it arises from a heart affectionately attached to everything which she ought to love, and her sufferings are sufficient to alter the natural gaiety of her disposition. I should be very sorry, if her troubles contributed to perpetuate the swelling with which she is affected; it is a great deal to be able to say that it does not increase, and if things were in a more settled state, she might go to the waters of Bourbon, where it is to be hoped she would be entirely cured. No, Madam, I would lay a wager,

ha t you are not the dupe of this Princess, when you think that she would regret you, if she could no longer see you: her mind and disposition are too good not to find in you her enjoyment and consolation, and not to acknowledge that she would not meet with all that she finds rare and amiable in you in any other person. I hope she will not find herself for a long time to come, in such a dilemma. Nothing can be prettier or more interesting than what the Duke of Brittany said to Madame de Ventadour, on the two teeth which he had cut; ours is not less forward in proportion, and although he says little, he does not fail to make his wants loudly known, and it is enough for him to have seen a person once or twice to know him again. He goes every day by himself into the Queen's closet to kiss the Duke of Brittany's portrait, which is a sign that these two cousins will love each other and be united in interests.

At length, Madame de Soubise, after long sufferings has finished her days, honoured to the last, and nevertheless weaned, as I am informed, from the things of this world. The Prince de Conti, according to every probability, will speed'ly follow her. There are, indeed, many persons of distinction who have died since my return to this country.

Be pleased to accept my most humble thanks, when you command my services, for persons whom you wish to honour with your protec

tion; I will do the needful for Madame d'Hohora, when I hear the matter discussed.

The officer for the Queen's household is not yet arrived; he cannot help being good, since you have taken the trouble to select him. Your dinners were set out to great advantage, and to live well, the mistress of the house must be well acquainted with the subject. One of the Queen's waiting women is in great danger from a high fever, and an inflammation in the chest, which she neglected in the beginning; and a Spanish physician who visited her, prescribed cold things for her to drink, and other medicines equally unsuitable, which were highly disapproved of by the King's first physician, who was only called in two days ago. The girl was on the eve of marrying a Spanish gentleman in the body guard, a worthy man: they were both much attached to each other, so that their situation excites pity.

I have nothing more to add, than to answer you respecting the cabal, against which I took the liberty of telling you to be upon your guard; but upon which you require a clearer explanation, since you appear scarcely to comprehend it; however, the ambassador has taken it up for me, having written a long letter upon the subject to the court. These four or five grandees continue to talk very mischievously; they wish people to believe in France that all is going to ruin here, if

the government is not changed; nevertheless they act only through passion or prejudice, and things would long since have been in confusion, if their evil councils had been followed; they meet together as often as they can, and publicly give it out that the Duke of Orleans is at their head. The Dutch gazettes are full of this wretched trash; and I am continually asked whether it be true that I have quarrelled with his Royal Highness, and whether I am upon good terms with the King. I answer, that I do not think I have given any cause to spread such reports, and that if his Majesty should not, unfortunately and unexpectedly, be satisfied with my proceedings, I should have very humbly entreated him to accept my resignation of the place I occupy. I have caused a letter from the Duke of Orleans to be read to some of the courtiers, my friends, in which his Royal Highness does me the honour of writing to me in the most obliging manner in the world, to refer myself to you, rather than to people who might be interested in our not being upon so good an understanding together as we are. They were surprised that this Prince evinced so much friendship towards me, when they wished to have it believed at Madrid, and even in France, that I have quarrelled with him, and I think the above steps will produce a good effect. His Royal Highness, if I am allowed to say so, would be much to blame, if he was backward in

acknowledging the respectful and sincere attachment I ever entertained for him. You are acquainted better than any one, how I have spoken to you of all his good and great qualities, and I have not two manners of explaining myself in regard to him with every body. Here is an end of this matter; but my affection and attachment for you are boundless.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 4th, 1709.

I YESTERDAY received three of your letters together, dated the 10th, 11th and 17th ultimo, successively increasing in gloominess, so much so, that I have only observed one ray of sprightliness, when you ask me what I shall do, if I can get no spinnage, in consequence of the frosts which have killed all the vegetables. I own that I immediately took this joke as an antidote against everything which I read of a distressing and heart-rending nature in your letters; I experienced its good effects, and whenever I reflect upon the misfortunes which you predict, I have recourse to my spinnage, and flatter myself, that notwithstanding your chagrin, you have not lost all hope. But

why should we lose it? Have we no more troops or generals? When Marshal de Berwick gained the battle of Almanza, which he had resolved not to risk, and which he really would not have done, had not the enemy forced him to it, had he before acquired the reputation of a great captain by other actions of a similar nature? How many general officers are there, his seniors, who have been in more actions? He, however, gained that battle, and it would have been all over with Spain in case it had been lost. Count de la Motte, who thought he acted right in preserving the corps which he commanded, committed a greater fault, without intending it, than if he had lost half his men by a vigorous defence of Ghent, since the enemy has even confessed that they would have been obliged to retire if he had held out four days. When places are lost in sight of armies, which do not attempt to relieve or preserve them, they are of no great use; and I have also heard that the old soldiers were in despair at not being led into action. In short, I cannot be persuaded that there is no longer valour, merit and zeal in the French; and I think, that if it is sought after, it will be found, provided no belief is placed in those people, who are selfishly interested in ruining or raising persons whom they love or hate, or who esteem so little the glory of the King or the good of the state, as to advise that everything should be abandoned for the sake of existing afterwards in

a disreputable effeminacy. I could wish that you would do me the honour of opening your mind to me, with your usual sincerity, upon an affair I am written to concerning Madame de Soubise, which you can do without any difficulty, since she is dead; and although she were living, I protest to you that I should harbour no resentment against her; it is that she was one of the most violent of the party, who wished to persuade the King that it was necessary to make peace upon any terms, and that he must for this purpose absolutely leave their Catholic Majesties to their fate? I am very anxious to know if this be true, and I hope you will not refuse me this satisfaction.

I return you a thousand most humble thanks for relieving my anxiety, respecting the sickness of Marshal de Boufflers. Men like him are so rare, that one cannot too much desire their preservation. I could sincerely wish that M. le Prince, and the Prince de Conti, were in the same good state of health; but theirs is very different, although the Princess, who has done me the honour of writing to me at great length by the last post the particulars of their complaints, by order even of M. le Prince, seems not quite to despair of the Prince de Conti, and flatters herself that her husband will get better. I admire the King's complaisance in going on purpose to Marly, to amuse the Duchess of Burgundy. As she is young, fond of company and play, she will be

more relieved from her chagrin than at Versailles, where there is not so full a court. If the lively friendship which subsists between her and the Princess of England continues, the Duchess of Burgundy may often have the pleasure of seeing her.

The Duke begins early to be afflicted with the gout, and, perhaps, had M. Fagon prescribed a regimen respecting living too well and drinking champagne, he would, in case he had observed it, have found himself better: it seems to me, that both the men and women endeavour to kill themselves, and yet they are in despair when death approaches. I can easily conceive that the first physician will have much difficulty in finding one suitable for the Queen; however, I ask him as a favour, not to be discouraged, because I do not know what we should do, if the head physician of the Spanish King were taken ill.

Yes, Madam, I wish your life may be protracted to more than an hundred and fourteen years, which would cause you to be looked upon as a prodigy. You would, perhaps, be a loser by it, since you are disgusted with everything you see at present; but the public and your faithful servants and friends would gain too much by it, to be of your opinion; moreover, fortune, perhaps, would become more favourable, which would afford you pleasure, you would see the King better satisfied, and you would add greatly to the number

of your good deeds. The Marquis de Mœnsera has entered into his hundredth year, and is cheerful and sprightly, and I hope you will follow his example.

M. de Vendome, who has acquired the esteem of the Spaniards, is about retiring, then, to Anet, at which they appear very sorry. There are so many sick on every side, that it is not astonishing the Chancellor and M. Chamillard are attacked, and more especially the latter, who under his fatigues, finds little consolation. I have done myself the honour of speaking to you of the affairs of Rome, since we learnt that the Pope had acknowledged the Archduke. If there is any timidity shown in this business, it will be the means of completely spoiling everything: all the well disposed subjects of the King of Spain, could wish energy to be shown, both in France and here, and I think they are in the right, for dejection serves only to render the enemy more arrogant. The ambassador is of the same opinion, and he informs the King of everything necessary to be done.

God grant that it may turn out in other respects advantageous, that the little corps of Marshal de Noailles receives no reinforcements! There would be, however, a fine difference between speedily expelling the Archduke from Catalonia, by the capture of Girona, which would compel him to adopt this measure, or leaving him in Bar-

celona, and giving him leisure to receive a considerable reinforcement from Italy, now that no diversion can be made, in that country, the Emperor giving the law to his Holiness, as at Naples and Milan, and the other Princes being likewise obliged to receive it.

The Duchess of Burgundy refused to play with the Duke de Vendome, because she does not think it right to do him that honour. She could not I think excuse herself more civilly than she did, and it would be extremely wrong, on every account, to presume to blame her for it.

The Queen will, like the Duchess of Burgundy, put on mourning for some days for Madame de Maubuisson. I remember that it was the Duchess d'Uzes who was the first to introduce this fashion, at the death of her aunt, the Abbess de Saint Etienne, at Rheims: I think it a bad custom, and which cannot give pleasure to the good nuns, who ought to be exempted from vanity, and who vow that they renounce the world. There is a report that the Abbé de la Rue will succeed Father de la Chaise. I have seldom heard more persuasive sermons than his, which the Catholic King recollects, and much commends; and his approbation is not to be despised, for besides understanding perfectly well his religion, he has both judgment and taste.

Our ambassador was delighted with your assuring me that the King is satisfied with him,

and he certainly does everything in his power to deserve the honour of his Majesty's esteem, his labours being great and not unproductive. I have another friend, with whom their Catholic Majesties are very well satisfied, and there is certainly nothing more commendable than his conduct; I mean Cardinal Aquaviva, who has recently written to me, desiring me to tell the King of Spain from him, that he is quite ready to declare himself openly, should his Majesty think proper: although he has the horour of being born his subject, he does not pass for being of the party in favour of this crown, so long as he does not make this declaration. Before leaving Madrid, his Eminence wished to know what would be most agreeable to his Majesty, who thought that it was better for the Cardinal to serve him secretly than openly. I do not yet know the answer that he will order me to give him, but I very well know, that it is in times so disagreeable as these, that honest men declare themselves! more creatures than enough are found when fortune smiles, and scarcely any when she frowns. All the house of Ati, which is numerous, entertain the same sentiments; it is useless to mention those which I have for you, since I cannot sufficiently well express the extent of my affection and respect.

P.S. I am ashamed, Madam, of adding to so long a letter, but I am under too many obligations to the Archbishop of Aix, to dispense with recommend-

ing to you the interests of the Bishop de Die, his nephew, who is very poor, and at the death of his uncle none of the benefices fell to his share. It is said that the see of Versailles is now vacant; he would be very happy if on this occasion the King would do him the honour of calling to mind his uncle's merit and his own in particular, for his Majesty has not a more faithful subject.

LETTER CXXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 15th, 1709.

I HAD the honour of writing to you too long a letter by the last post, to trespass again upon your patience to-day. The King of Spain, doubtless, informs the King of the success attending the springing of the mine, to blow up the Castle of Alicant; it was a dreadful affair, and the English who were in it must have evinced a great contempt of life, to refuse the capitulation which the Chevalier d'Asfield twice offered them, and he does not doubt but that the garrison of the place, which he thinks has suffered severely, will be at length forced to surrender. This would be desirable, because the whole kingdom of Valencia would then be completely rid of the enemy, and

would not require the number of troops which are there at present; while the greatest advantage would result from sending them into Catalonia, to endeavour to expel at any rate the Archduke this campaign. I do not think that the Duke de Noailles differs from me upon this subject, since he knows the consequences of it.

I was thinking of going to Aranjuez for a fortnight, for change of air and exercise, which my health much requires; but being informed that the atmosphere of this place was too damp, owing to the late floods, I gave up my intention and shall now go to the Retiro, to which the Queen has been pleased to consent. Whilst there, I shall have the honour of coming and paying my court to her, either in the morning or afternoon, and returning in the evening. I intend to take the exercise of walking till I am tired, in order to lay in a stock of good health, so as to be able the better to sustain the fatigue attending the confinement of her Majesty; for besides my services near the Queen, and having to answer all inquirers after her health, I shall have under my care the Prince of Asturias, and the Infant or Infanta which it may please God to send us. You will own that it requires much strength to sustain so many bodily and mental occupations, and more especially when the latter are of so unpleasant a nature. The Queen is well; it is still thought that the oath to the Prince will take

place on the 7th of next month. Their Majesties will go for four days to the Retiro, in order to be near the Church of Saint Hieronymus, which stands near the palace, and in which this ceremony will take place. I think you will not be sorry to hear who the ladies of the grandees are who will have the honour of accompanying the Queen; they are the Duchesses de Frias and Medina Sidonia, the former is the lady of the Constable of Castile, Grand Master of the King's household, and the latter, the wife of the Grand Almoner; the Duchesses d'Ossuna and de Popoli, wives of the two captains of the body guard; the lady of the Marquis de Aguiton, whose husband is commandant of the regiment of guards; the lady of the Marquis de Lombaya, whose husband represents the house of Borgia, and whose father, the Duke of Candia, is the first gentleman of the bed-chamber; the Countess de Gormas, daughter-in-law to the Marquis de Villena, Viceroy of Naples, now a prisoner at Milan; the Countess d'Altamira, daughter of the Marquis d'Astorga, of the house Gusman; the lady of the Marquis de la Jamuca, daughter-in-law to the Duke de Veraguas, and daughter of the Duke de Cessa, first gentleman of the bed-chamber, and lately honoured with the blue ribbon; the Countess de Cabra, wife of his eldest son; the Marchioness de Solero, daughter-in-law of the Count d'Estevan, Grand Master

of the Queen's household; the Marchioness de Bedmar, who is no stranger to you, the Marchioness d'Aigular, sister of the Duchess de Medina Cœli, who is also of the number; and the Marchioness de Priego, daughter of the Marquis de los Balbases, and whose husband will be heir to the Duke de Medina Cœli. All the ladies or daughters-in-law of the grandees are equally treated, when they come to the palace, that is to say, having the *almohada* or cushion, which is not the case with the daughters-in-law of our French Dukes, who stand in the royal presence, like other ladies of quality. All these ladies are preparing magnificent dresses, in emulation of each other. It appears that they have been much affected by this distinguished honour; there are however two who have not returned thanks, namely the Duchess de Medina Cœli, and the Marchioness de Priego, her niece; all the others have written to me, desiring me to present their respectful gratitude, till the Queen shall permit them to come in person to pay the tribute themselves.

The nurse of the Prince of Asturias, whom we hoped would complete her task, has had the same accident which obliged us to change the others; but we have had the good fortune to experience no difficulty in getting the Prince to take another; I think as reason dawns upon him, he knows that he should not be attached to any one in particular.

If I were as cheerful as formerly, and could trifle with you, I could add that he will not disgrace the blood from whence he springs; but I refrain from such a style when I think seriously. In whatever state, I am equally yours, Madam, and more at your service than words can express.

P.S. The inquisitor general died yesterday; he was a pious man, and very much attached to the King, his master, which causes him to be much regretted, as this office requires to be filled by a good and faithful subject.

LETTER CXL.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 14th, 1709.

The weather continues so cold, that I have not yet put into execution my project of going to the Retiro for exercise, which I feel is absolutely necessary for me; as soon as the air is milder, I shall go there, and hope that in walking about and seeing no one, my head and my health will be benefited. You are too good to be anxious about them, and I return you many thanks for it; but my indispositions are not of that consequence to make you uneasy, and I could wish it were as

easy to cure your cold, as it is to recover me completely.

Though the death of the Prince de Conti might be expected, it has not been the less affecting; and all the Spaniards who have been in France, testify their sorrow upon the occasion. Good God, Madam, in what a sad state the three Princes are, of whom you do me the honour to make mention! I fear they cannot sustain it, and lest it be a death blow to M. le Prince. The Duchess de Noailles will be very uneasy at the sickness of Madame de Beaumanoir. It is true that a prodigious number of people have died within the last two or three years; and though I think I know them all, you will oblige me by sending the list. The Duchess de Bejar died this morning, from the rupture of a blood vessel, at the age of twenty-two; she was daughter-in-law of the lady of the same name, whom the Queen took into her service as *camarera mayor*, during my absence from Madrid. Her husband, who had already lost his first wife, is one of the rich Spanish lords, and has no children. Don Pedro Zuniga, his brother, whom his Majesty sent to communicate to the King the birth of the Prince of Asturias, possesses maxims and manners very different from those of his brother, and report speaks highly of him.

It is very deplorable that the King is obliged

to change his plans, on account of the bad state of the Marshal de Boufflers' health; I own that the worst of all evils is the want of money; as for men I thought there were plenty; it is certain, however, that money agents never had so much. It would be a strange folly for M. de Soubise to marry Madame de Verrue, and thus to ruin his children. It is more than a year since one of my friends wrote to me to say, that she thought him capable of this. You are right in being surprised at the extreme blindness of men, at being so much attached to life, which is so short, and gives birth to so many frivolous projects. Madame de Soubise, who had always endeavoured to make rich matches for her children, will only, perhaps, have done so to enrich another. The Duchess de Ventadour would be much displeased, if this is the case. This is all I have the honour of writing to you; however gloomy your letters are, do not deprive me of them if you please; I cannot do without them, since these marks of your friendship are my greatest consolation.

P.S. I thought of sending this letter by the courier, who departs in four days, but the ambassador despatching a courier extraordinary to France, I embrace the opportunity, and perhaps shall not have the honour of writing to you by the usual post, unless something occurs here to require it, because I am very much occupied with the Queen's dress, that of the Prince, and

the persons who will have the honour of accompanying him, and with the baptism of the son of the young Marchioness de Terrecousa, for whom the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy have done the ambassador and me the honour to stand as proxies. All this is more than enough to make the days too short, but I will, nevertheless, exert myself as much as possible, that everything may be conducted with suitable dignity.

March 15th.

I HAVE just received your letter of the 4th instant, and am delighted at the King's arrangements respecting the generals, which also gives great satisfaction to all those who wish well to the two Kings, and I expect much from this campaign, notwithstanding your fears. What joy for the King, if Monseigneur should retrieve affairs: Marshal de Villars is fortunate, and the confidence he shows, notwithstanding he knows the troops to be in bad condition, appears to me a favourable omen. Could I presume to ask you, whether the Duke of Burgundy is well disposed towards the Duke d'Harcourt, and whether this Marshal has been reconciled to the Duke de Beauvilliers, his family and friends. It is not because I think that the Prince meddles with these sort of things, and that he is not above them, but it is certain that when there is a prejudice in favour, or against any one, there is greater occasion for being atten-

tive to what is to be done, than when no prejudice exists. I have nothing more, Madam, to answer you.

LETTER CXLI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 18th, 1709.

I HAD the honour of informing you, Madam, in a letter which I sent by the ambassador's courier, that you would not hear from me this post, unless I had something fresh to communicate; the latter is the case to-day, and I am sorry for it. The Queen, as she was walking slowly in her chamber, yesterday evening, fell upon her knees; but as her fall was not violent, I hope it will not be attended with any unpleasant consequences. Her Majesty had the precaution to take a glass of water immediately after, and to lie down. She will keep her bed for nine days, in order to run no risk, although she has not felt the least pain. We should have been in great trouble, had the Queen injured herself in her eighth month, Clement not having yet arrived, and the midwives of Madrid being in no repute. God preserve her Majesty, and I always flatter myself that he will work some miracle in favour of the King and her. This accident postpones my intended excursion to the Retiro.

The baptism of the Duke de Saint George, son to the Marchioness de Terracousa, whom I had the honour of holding by proxy for the Duchess of Burgundy, with the ambassador for Monseigneur, was celebrated yesterday, with all the splendour suitable to such sponsors. M. Amelot had the whole of the church covered with the richest carpets that could be procured: there was a great display of silver, and a large band of music. Many grandees came, who were invited by the Marquis and his lady to be present in this celebration; the chapel exhibited an embroidered bed of gold, on which the infant was laid till our arrival, which is the custom at Madrid. There was a prodigious quantity of people to see the ceremony, which was the first that had taken place at this court, since we are assured that members of the royal family had never before done this honour to any one. When all was over, the company visited the child's mother, where they partook of a grand collation, which our ambassador had gallantly sent; he also placed round the neck of this newly made christian, a diamond necklace, from which was suspended a diamond cross; and, in short, Madam, no effort was spared to do honour to Monseigneur and the Duchess of Burgundy. The Marquis and his lady desired me at the time, to offer their respectful thanks to the Princess; and I thought you would have the goodness to be the bearer of theirs, as well as mine,

and that this way would be less troublesome than if I did myself the honour of writing them a formal letter on the subject.

LETTER CXLII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, March 21st, 1709.

It is only not to lose an opportunity of writing to you, that I do so to-day by return of the courier of the Duke of Alba; for that of M. Amelot having returned without bringing me letters from you, I shall not have much to say in mine. The Queen continues to keep her bed since her fall, six days ago, from which she has experienced no inconvenience; in fact she has never looked so well during her pregnancy, as she does at present. M. Clement, and Madame de la Salle, will only arrive at the beginning of next week. Their zeal for his Majesty's service having caused them to set out sooner than I mentioned, they will be obliged to wait for the carriages, which have been sent for them from Madrid, as far as Bayonne, where they have been nearly a fortnight; so that they have had time to rest themselves, which will the better enable them to perform the rest of their journey.

Our good Archbishop of Saragossa has already

arrived in this city, to be present at the oath to be taken to the Prince. I was very well acquainted with him, when the Queen went to assemble the states in Arragon, where her Majesty had every reason to be satisfied with his zeal: he is a very worthy prelate, of tried fidelity, and sincerely attached to their Catholic Majesties. He suffered every possible outrage from the fury of the enemy when this kingdom revolted: he observed this morning to a grandee, who came to pay him a visit, that when he was in the hands of the Germans, he soon made up his mind, thinking that the worst which could happen to him, would be to lose his head, and that he should have esteemed himself happy, if of a bad priest, as he was, they had made a good martyr of him. He is not the only prelate we have in Spain who prefers his duty to everything else; we have, thank God, many of the same character, who are very useful, to cherish in the people an affection for their King.

It is ascertained that the governor of Alicant and two colonels were killed, when the mine was sprung, and that all is alarm there. Nevertheless, Madam, they do not yet surrender; but the Chevalier d'Asfeld asserts, that this must soon be the case. I have nothing more to inform you of, respecting this country; it is where you are, that should be the scene of important events; on our side at least we continue to brave the storm, and

LETTER C.

TO THE SA

M

Your last letter, Madam,
would furnish me materials,
wished to touch upon the su
Duke of Orleans, but I am to
to probe this matter to the b
than one reason, I have bes
ments for the holy week, and
out for Rome, by whom I
therefore postpone to the nex
writing to you more at lengt
kept her bed nine days, and
on well. The Prince has cut
makes the tenth; I think that C
de la Salle, who are expecte
will be

the honour, Madam, of being always a little indulgent to me.

LETTER CXLIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 1st, 1709.

Allow me to observe to you, Madam, that it is rather my place than yours, to judge whether your letters are agreeable or otherwise: they afford me infinite pleasure, however cheerful or gloomy they may be, although they produce different impressions; you unbosom yourself to me, with all your native frankness, and I prize this confidence, as a mark of your goodness, of which I am truly sensible.

Is it possible, Madam, that all the men whom you know, appear to you at their wits end, and that there are none capable of suggesting fresh resources? It is a sign of their despondency, which does them no credit, for however awkwardly affairs may be situated, great minds and courageous hearts always struggle most against bad fortune. God works miracles when he pleases, and I implore of him, at this time, that of reviving the dejected hopes of your court, and of effecting a reconciliation amongst those who have so

much occasion for it. I hope, with you, Madam, that their Catholic Majesties will not be deserted by heaven, and that their virtues, in spite of the injustice of man, and the success of their enemies, will draw down upon them its blessings, and although it is said that peace should be made on any terms, I trust this will never be the case.

Pardon me, if I have the honour of observing to you, that I should not think it right to consent to a disgraceful peace, even though I should be near you, to see everything that is occurring; and Marshal de Boufflers and I should have a grand contest before I gave up the point.

I am not astonished, Madam, at the anger of the Duke of Alba, when he hears it suggested that the King, his master, should be prevailed upon disgracefully to cede his great monarchy by a treaty, to which I certainly cannot think his Majesty will consent; and the ambassador is too good a subject not to perish with his master, rather than approve an action which would dishonour him in the eyes of the nation, and which posterity would scarcely believe.

I know not why Madame de Soubise has been accused of advising the abandonment of the King of Spain: it is surely enough to cast imputations upon the living, without injuring the memory of the dead.

This Marshal de Villars speaks and acts like those heroes of romance, who think they must

conquer wherever they go, and I prefer such conduct now, so much the reverse of that which has brought us near the precipice. If M. Demaretz supplies this general with money you shall see, Madam, that he will again put our affairs into a good way.

All you say and do is in vain, you will live in spite of yourself and not in spite of me, I assure you. I should be very sorry to lose Cardinal de Janson so soon.

Your Irish lady, whom you have done me the honour of recommending to me, has at length paid me a visit, having been eight months here without my knowing it, and I promised to do all in my power for her on your account.

M. Clement and Madame de la Salle are at last arrived, to our great satisfaction, and they have communicated to me, as you may conceive, all the kindnesses of the King, and the Duchess of Burgundy, as well as yours, at which I am much affected. I could wish to answer the remainder of yours of the 18th ultimo, but it is too late, my packet is sent for, and I must attend their Majesties.

LETTER CXLV.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, April 8th, 1709.

No letters, Madam, from Versailles by the last post; it is therefore imagined, that they must have been forwarded by the courier extraordinary despatched from hence by M. Amelot, and who, as a matter of course, should arrive to-day or to-morrow. I could wish that the King had detained him longer, so as that we might learn that the army is again in a good state, since Marshal de Villars has brought it a supply of money, together with confidence in a successful campaign.

The grand day for taking the oath to the Prince of Asturias has at length arrived, and the ceremony was yesterday performed in the church of the Retiro, with manifest joy in the countenances of all who were present to acknowledge him as the successor of the King his father. Cardinal Portocarero said high mass; the patriarch, who acts as grand almoner, confirmed the Prince; and the cardinal who had the honour of standing as godfather to him, was highly gratified. It will, doubtless, appear extraordinary to you that con-

understand its meaning; but it is the custom in Spain, and it was requisite before he could be acknowledged as heir. Never was a ceremony performed, with more pomp, order and magnificence. The Prince himself gave his hand to kiss to those who kneeled before him, and as that lasted more than three hours, and he was attacked with hunger and sleep at the same moment, he began to cry, being quite exhausted with the exercise; but his nurse being sent for, and although she relieved him, he continued to hold out his little hand to kiss in a most charming manner. I placed M. Clement and Madame de la Salle in my pew, where they saw everything. I am sure, Madam, they thought the spectacle very fine, and that the King and Queen actually appeared in their proper characters when they left the palace of Madrid to come to this. All the streets were full, as also the balconies and windows, from whence everybody shouted in praise of their Majesties and the Prince, which ought to be a convincing proof that their love of them increases, rather than diminishes, and that there is only a small number of ill-disposed persons, who are scarcely worth naming, unless it is to make them feel what they owe to their sovereigns. One of this description fell at the Prince's feet as he was approaching to kiss his hand, which gave rise to some trifling reflections. I think we shall return at the end of this week to the palace. To-

assures us that it will take place on Saint Ph
day, and that she will have an Infanta. I c
sincerely wish for it, as you have no idea wl
good effect this would have on the minds o
Catalonians, who believe in predictions. I
nothing more to add, Madam, to what I have
had the honour of writing to you, since
Majesties and the ambassador write abou
that concerns public affairs. I am, as I c
to be, the most affectionate and most resp
of your servants.

P.S. I must not omit in my brief descri
of the ceremony, that Cardinal Portoc
received the oath, and the Duke de Medin
the homage which was paid to the Prince;
the Duke de Medina Sidonia held the naked s
by the side of the King, an honour whic
formerly attached to the house of the
d'Oropesa; and that young Count d'Ag

been jealous of the individual upon whom it had been conferred, which expedient was proposed by the ambassador and very much approved.

LETTER CXLVI.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, April 14th, 1709.

It is now a long time, Madam, since I am without a letter from you, the last post having brought me none. I might fear lest you had forgotten me, if I conceived you less perfect than you are; but you are incapable of changing, and even of abating your goodness, for a servant and a friend who is devoted to you as I am. However, as the honourable proofs of your kindness sustain me in my present painful situation, continue I entreat you to give me them as often as possible.

The cholic, which has again attacked the King, although thank God, not dangerous, does not fail to give me pain, knowing from experience that the sufferings it causes are very acute. The Duke of Alba has informed us that his Majesty has been bled for it, which has entirely cured him. Nothing of consequence has occurred in this court since

my last letter. The King and Queen have been so comfortable at the Retiro, since the grand ceremony of taking the oath to the Prince, that they have not yet returned to the palace. Their Majesties walk about in this house, the gardens of which are very convenient, being on a level with the apartments. M. Clement approves of the Queen taking exercise; he does not think she will be confined till the beginning of May.

At length, Madam, we have lost M. le Prince. Although we could scarcely flatter ourselves with his recovery after so long an illness, his death has not failed to afflict me: he had honoured me with his attentions at all times and on every occasion which is sufficient to make me regret him as long as I live. The Prince and the Princess of Conti are, I think, in a strange state; I know not how the present Prince will behave to them: it appears to me that his mother has always had a great affection for him; but sometimes this is not enough. I rejoice with you, Madam, at the millions which the French vessels have brought from the Indies. It would be desirable for the King of Spain, that his Viceroy the Marquis de Castel los Rios should serve him better than he does. This court appears to me to be dissatisfied with him, because he ought to have sent to his Catholic Majesty much more money than he has done, knowing as he does, how much it is wanted: nevertheless, he is indebted to him for his title of

grandee and his fortune, which the Spaniards have always envied him. It is true that it was through the patronage of the King, to whom he had the honour of being ambassador, that the King, his master, granted him all that he has given him, and therefore, he should not be ungrateful. Apropos, of the vice-royalties of the Indies, I think it my duty, Madam, to do myself the honour of giving you an account of two letters I received from Madame d'O. respecting a Spaniard, called M. de Menecez. She earnestly pressed me for him to succeed the Marquis de Castellos Rios, or the Duke d'Alburquerque telling me, it would give great pleasure to the Duchess of Burgundy, and sending me a letter from that Princess to the Queen, which I had the honour of presenting to her, and which contained a request to her Majesty, that she would ask this favour of the King her husband. The Queen only laughed at it, clearly perceiving that the persons who had prevailed upon her sister to make such a request, were but little aware of the importance of such offices, or that they had been deceived by the aspirant after it, who gave himself out for a more important character than he is. In truth, Madam, this pretension is nearly the same thing as if the Queen asked the Duchess of Burgundy to use her influence with the King in behalf of a simple French gentleman, in order to obtain for him the government of Burgundy or Brittany; but it is

not worth speaking about. I have not presumed to intimate to Madame d'O. that notwithstanding her good sense, she had outwitted herself in an affair of this kind, and therefore I have not answered her. I should, however, be very sorry if she was displeased with me; she might learn from the Duke of Alba whether M. de Menecez, although a very honest man, and whose father had formerly so well defended Valenciennes, ought to be preferred to the greatest lords of the monarchy, who volunteer their services in those remote countries.

LETTER CXLVII.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, April 17th, 1709.

God be praised, Madam! A courier of my friend M. de Pontchartrain brought me your letters of the 24th and 31st ultimo. Although they are scarcely more cheerful, than the reflection caused by the list of deaths which you have annexed, I cannot help welcoming them, since they contain good accounts of the healths of the King and Monseigneur, for I rely solely on you upon a subject which is so near my heart. I hope that

this terrible cholic may not return again, provided his Majesty will only take a little care of himself.

You appear to me too flattering, Madam, from your observations upon the ceremony, of which I had the honour to give you a description, for a person who sees nothing but misfortunes on every side, and who is hopeless as to their termination. You will not even allow yourself to pray to God for his miraculous interposition, and I cannot conceive whence arises your scruples. Are you inclined to limit his power? The more difficult everything becomes, the more worthy it is for him to manifest his omnipotence.

I am very different from you in this respect; I pray to him, and have prayers said by better beings than myself, to change everything in our favour, and I do not despair (although resigned to his dispensations) but that at length he will listen to our prayers and protect the justice of our cause, which is so very much oppressed.

The Queen sends for me, and the courier being about immediately to depart, I have not time to say more, but must unwillingly conclude by assuring you of my great attachment.

LETTER CXLVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Buen Retiro, April 22nd,

After having had the honour of com
the Prince of Asturias, who accompanied th
jesties, to the palace of Madrid, I returne
Madam, to spend three days in taking m
I am leaving this to-morrow, after which
not quit the Queen's apartment, unless
complete everything necessary for the re
of the expected Infant or Infanta, and to
its little court. The fifth nurse having fall
it has been determined to wean the Prince
is strong and eats whatever is offered t
this is thought to be the best plan.

The news of the surrender of the c
Alicant arrived yesterday evening, to th
joy of every one. Nor can the plea
described which all Madrid manifested, w
King and Queen passed through this
Saturday. The grandees, who were on foo
the sedan of this Princess, the whole of th
household, which is splendid, the str
carpeted, the balconies filled with well
women, and the great number of peop

appeared delighted, formed, indeed, an admirable sight, and should for a moment dispel your chagrin, to enjoy the pleasure of knowing that their Catholic Majesties are so much beloved by their subjects. What I have the honour of telling you is correct, for I will not conceal from you the truth. I expect, with much impatience, the arrival of the post this week, for which you know the reason; I sincerely thank God that the King and yourself are in good health, which is all I can have the honour of saying to you.

LETTER CXLIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, April 28th, 1709.

Your letters become very rare, Madam; I have received none by the last post, and such a privation always grieves me; therefore, having nothing to reply to, I have only to communicate my sentiments respecting the most important of my concerns, since it behoves me to merit the continuation of the King's gracious favour, without which I should be the most unhappy of human beings. The peace, which it is announced from all quarters his Majesty is negociating, and the conditions of

which are circulated, renders my situation as unpleasant as it is critical. I am at a loss how to conduct myself under such painful circumstances; but knowing that I am truly French, that my respectful attachment [illegible]e King is boundless, and that my gratitude [illegible] his favours continues the same, suffer me, mos[illegible] humbly, to entreat you to lay down a rule fo[illegible] conduct, in order that the King may see more c[illegible]rly by my actions how much I am devoted to h[illegible] service. His ambassador, whose zeal is commensurate with his intelligence and assiduity, will conceal nothing from him of what occurs in this court, and that it is the firm resolution of his Catholic Majesty not to abandon his crown and his subjects but with life for which reason I shall say nothing more on this topic, as it would only be a repetition of the same thing.

April 29th.

I have at length received this morning, by the return of the ambassador's courier, a letter from you, dated the 15th April, which I shall postpone answering until M. Amelot despatches another which he says will be the first opportunity.

The Prince of Asturias, thank God, is weaned and enjoys perfect health. We are momentarily expecting the Queen's confinement.

LETTER CL.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 6th, 1709.

I RECEIVED by the last post, Madam, a letter from the Baron de Capres, who forwarded me that which you did me the honour of writing to me, to recommend to me his interests at this court; and your manner of doing it is in truth very pressing, since you observe to me that you must act in accordance with the wishes of the lady of Marshal de Noailles, feeling all the influence which she has over you. Allow me to tell you that she would exercise it more mildly, if you were less unkind to her, and all the other members of your family. I shall endeavour to make amends for it, by doing all that I possibly can for the Baron de Capres, and with as much zeal as you possess indifference; heartily loving as I do my friends, and knowing, moreover, from experience, that certain features of character on which you pride yourself, as I have also done for the last eight years, do us no honour, and serve only to create enemies.

You will have seen by my last letter, my sentiments on passing events, the great desire I have to anticipate all the King's wishes, and my

unpleasant and delicate situation. 'I thought at first of taking the liberty to write to the King myself, very humbly to entreat him to prescribe for me a line of conduct; but on mature reflection I thought it [illegible] address you, in order to ascertain his [illegible] tentions, and to have the goodness to ex[illegible] m to me in every particular, which favour [illegible] eat your goodness to excuse if I now renew [illegible] e Queen, until now, has felt no symptoms [illegible] approaching confinement, which induces M. Clement to think that she may go till the 15th or 20th instant. The people anticipate great pleasure at her Majesty being on the eve of giving them an Infant or Infanta; and it appears that their attachment for their Sovereign redoubles since they are afraid of losing him, which is reciprocally the case with the King and Queen for such good subjects.

I am much astonished that Marshal de Villars has found the troops in better condition and better disposed than was reported at Versailles; it would appear that almost every one endeavours to dishearten the King: the interest of this general would be rather to magnify than diminish the evils, in order to avoid the blame of unpleasant contingencies, and to acquire glory from any success. However, he may well think that he will be able to do nothing with this army if it is not paid. How long, Madam, has it been

money nor men, and that every sacrifice must be made to obtain peace! You, however, have seen the falsehood of this the last campaign; and had the generals been united, it would have struck you still more forcibly that there was despair when there were resources. I will not enlarge upon the subject, since it would only tend to mortify us both; but assuredly, Madam, it strikes me, that if I could have the honour of an interview with you, I should unbosom myself and point out several things which plunge us into the abyss, but which might have been prevented, or at least remedied. I will always hope for the intercession of heaven in our favour. Cardinal de Portocarero would not be at all of your opinion respecting death; he takes great pleasure in witnessing the birth of an Infant or Infanta, and in returning from Toledo, where he is at present, to be here on the Queen's confinement.

Madame de Courcillon is in a singular predicament, to have the pains of labour and not to be confined; it would be a great pity if such a pretty woman died, and I should grieve for the two families who would sustain the loss. I no longer hear Madame de Saint-Geran spoken of, since you inform me, that, in consequence of sickness, she had retired to a convent at Paris. I could wish she were cured and at Versailles again, as she is good company, and cheerful in conversation, of which you stand in need in

consequence of the present dreadful state of affairs; which I feel as well as yourself, participating in your troubles and all your concerns, and sensibly feeling whatever affects you.

LETTER CLI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 10th, 1709.

Excuse me, Madam, for not answering to-day your two letters of the 26th and 29th ultimo, which are of too gloomy a cast to interfere with the joy that we experience at the news of the Portuguese having been defeated. The Marquis de Bay has shewn that he knew what to do, on so important and glorious an occasion, for the subjects of his Catholic Majesty: he has taken seventeen pieces of cannon, the whole of the baggage, three English battalions, and the Count de Saint-John prisoner, who is a general, with several other officers. It is thought that the enemy have lost more than four thousand men, exclusive of prisoners. This affair will probably be attended with favourable results.

All the grandees, and the populace, ran to the palace to testify their satisfaction, and now, as I

am writing to you, the square is quite full of people Would to God that Marshal de Villars may do something to be spoken of! Be so good, I entreat you, to make my respectful compliments to the King, the Duchess of Burgundy, and all the royal family, to whom I do not take the liberty of writing, lest I should be troublesome.

P.S. The Marquis de Bay highly extols the feats of the Marquis de Caylus in this action, which I beg you to inform your niece of: she will not be sorry for it; I am very much so that the Duchess de Noailles is not pregnant.

LETTER CLII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 19th, 1709.

The letters which I have lately sent you were written in so great a hurry, that I re-perused yours in order to answer them more at length. That which appears to me of the greatest consequence is the health of the King, the Duchess of Burgundy, and your own, which, thank God, is preserved in the midst of so many distractions, so well calculated to injure it, were it not for his protection. I have a favourable future presentiment from it, and I cannot believe that our misfortunes

will last long, or that heaven has not some unforeseen consolation in store for us all. I doubt, however, whether it be M. de Torcy's journey which is to give us a glimpse of it; a piece of news which has alarmed all good Spaniards, who imagine that he is gone to Holland to negociate a peace, quite contrary to their wishes; but however, we shall probably soon learn what truth there is in this. Nothing is more dreadful than famine; it is almost general; nevertheless there is plenty of corn in the Morea, which the Italian princes get supplied with. Why not do the same in France?

Can it be possible, Madam, that the means of subsisting the fine and well disposed troops under Marshal de Villars are wanting? I am persuaded that this general will do something worth talking of, if he is properly supported.

The Princess and the Duke have done me the honour of writing to me, at the same time that they sent me letters for their Catholic Majesties. The Princess appears to be overwhelmed with grief, at which I am not surprised, knowing as I do the excellence of her heart. I remember once going to pay my respects to her, and finding her alone, in a lower apartment of the hotel of Condé, bitterly weeping the fate of a nun of Maubuisson, a sister of M. Fagon; at which I was so much affected, that I wept very much also, although I had never known her; which evinced

what may be called, on my part, much weakness. The same thing happened to me for the Marquis de Nesle, of whom I knew but little more, on thinking of the despair in which I believed his wife was about to be plunged, who only laughed it was said, as she lay in bed, after his death was announced to her. I could, if I were inclined, relate to you many other similar follies, but I should fear incurring your contempt, when I have need of your esteem. The short grief of the Princess de Conti is remarkable. I regret having done myself the honour of imparting to you the affair in which Madame d'O. is engaged, from the apprehension lest it may injure her in your estimation. It often happens that persons possessing mind and merit, are more simple than others, and we ought not to entertain a less favourable opinion of them when they have been too credulous.

My dear friend, M. de Pontchartrain, has many enemies; for my part, his conduct to me has always been very kind.

It is a very good thing to have recourse to the saints. Public prayers have been a long time ordered in this country, and the fruits of the earth are very promising, although it is feared lest the great number of locusts, which have made their appearance, may do as much mischief as they did last year.

It is indeed not necessary for you to recommend the Duke de Noailles to me, since he is as dear to

me at least as to yourself, and I am sorry that a man like him, so devoted to the King, and who has so great an affection for his person, should quit him; but it is to serve him; and certainly there is reason to hope, if the French troops are paid in Catalonia, that his campaign will be not less glorious than advantageous, since the Archduke is too weak, and the Catalonians are much incommoded with his presence.

The Duchess appears as if she would be confined, without the presence of M. Clement, since the Queen feels no pains as yet, and it has been judged advisable to bleed her, because of her head being affected. Her Majesty felt weakness the day following, at mass, from which she was recovered by the application of some *eau de la reine*, and she is now quite well. The condition of poor Madame de Courcillon is pitiable; but Clement hopes that all will be right again. If Mademoiselle Sery does not approve of the Duchess of Orleans being pregnant, as you inform me, I think that the Princess herself is nearly as much averse to it, and that she is agreed with this person at least upon the subject. The Duke of Orleans' wound was so bad, that I fear he often feels its consequences. I am very glad that Madame de Saint-Geran is sufficiently recovered to return to Versailles, and as her society is cheerful and amusing, she will beguile your moments of sadness. I am quite grieved at the accident

which has happened to the Duchess de Noailles, although she is still young enough to be the mother of a family.

You see, Madam, that my pretended kindnesses for you are not so very much diminished as my letters; although this one is very long, it appears to me short, because I have not a greater pleasure than when I write to you. We should scold heartily, if we were nearer to each other; but what is certain is, that one of us would yield to reason if in the wrong, while nothing could prevent me from loving and honouring you.

LETTER CLIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, May 26th, 1709.

As I have not heard from you, Madam, the last post, I have only to talk to you of our court. The Queen not being yet confined, and feeling no symptoms, we begin to think it will only take place next month; for which I am very sorry, as I could wish to see her out of this painful affair, although those of a public nature promise us no future good; but, as God superintends everything, we must be resigned to his dispensations. There has

the figures of Saint Isidorus and that of his wife, who is beatified, were borne. This saint was a husbandman, and the people placed great confidence in his protection of the fruits of the earth, which appear extremely promising; but we have to fear the ravages of swarms of locusts which usually devour the corn. All the peasants catch as many as they can, and they are paid for their trouble by the bushel. Some provinces are not infested with these dangerous insects, as Andalusia and Estremadura, which produce much grain.

The Marquis de Bay vigorously follows up the victory he has obtained over the Portuguese, having passed the Caya in pursuit of them; but the fear of being again beaten has caused them to throw up entrenchments, so strong as to render it imprudent to attack them. This general has, however, compensated himself in some measure for it, by taking possession of the bridge of Olivença with scarcely any opposition. If this place is not better provided than what report says, it would not be impossible to capture it, which would be a very important advantage, being the best the King of Portugal has upon his frontiers.

You see, Madam, that we are not unfortunate in everything; but whatever disgrace may happen to me, I shall always be happy, provided you are pleased to continue me your friendship.

LETTER CLIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 3rd, 1709.

You have, then, felt no joy, Madam, on learning the news of the victory obtained over the Portuguese, but perhaps chagrin, fearing lest the successes in Spain should fortify his Catholic Majesty in the resolution to defend himself at all hazards, and lest this should become an obstacle in the way of a peace, so much desired. If, nevertheless, the enemy continued to be beaten in this country, you would not fail to find those with whom M. de Torcy is negociating less arrogant and unjust. But Marshal de Besons has not been sent upon such expeditions, and I am persuaded that although we should find expedients to subsist the French troops this campaign, he would not enter the field, to take advantage of the weakness of the Archduke in Catalonia. It is confessedly a great misfortune for the two Kings that measures will not be adopted which would be so advantageous to them. I much fear this will be seen when too late. A courier, despatched by the Duke of Alba, assures me, that throughout his journey the corn was coming on very well; so that if there is a probability of a

good harvest, that will put an end to the famine; but they frighten you, moreover, with the scurvy and the plague; why do not they add that the sky will fall?—I agree that every sort of disaster may happen, but why afflict yourself by anticipating evil? If the soldiers thought of dying with hunger, they would not be so courageous as they are, and the officers and Marshal de Villars being contented to eat black or oaten bread, I cannot believe but it will be found for them, and that such a disposition will be turned to good account. Pardon me, I intreat you, if I do not agree to the necessity there is of submitting to what the league wishes to impose upon the greatest monarch in the world; and I cannot imagine to myself the mortal chagrin which in such a case he would experience, without feeling inconceivable pain, for I scarcely know what could happen worse than this. I have been informed to-day, that M. de Besons is collecting all his troops, and as it is known that he is not calling in the French from the position which they occupied, to go in search of the enemy, it irritates the Spaniards, and may produce dreadful effects, of which the consequences may, perhaps, prove fatal. If the King had the goodness to impart his intentions to his ambassador, efforts would be made in obeying his wishes, to adopt suitable measures, and we should not then be exposed to the caprices of fortune.

Their Majesties are certainly in a strange situation; and I am already prepared, for having need of your protection, as likewise M. Amelot, since we have committed a crime in well serving the King of Spain, and by our continued good understanding. This conduct, however, is what the King prescribed to us on quitting Marly; to which, moreover, is to be added, the deference and affection that the King and Queen have constantly evinced for his Majesty, which are faults that will never be forgiven us, and which might ruin us entirely, if you had not the goodness to support us. I thought I should have received the King's orders, for which I entreated you to apply to him, as a rule for my conduct; I wait for them very impatiently, but I imagine that it was not intended to send me them, until the Marquis de Torcy had either concluded or broken off the negociations.

I did not know that the Count de Brionne's son was to marry Mademoiselle de Duras, this is a capital match, with a lady of family and a fortune of two millions. M. le Grand has reason to be very glad of it.

The Duke de la Rouchefoucauld adopts the wisest course, in his bad state of health; for I think it better to live at a distance from courts, than to pass one's days in them; nor can I doubt it, since you say, that nothing is more proper than for a great hunter to retire to the cover.

There cannot be a better expedient than that you have suggested, to prevent the Duchess of Mantua from prejudicing her rank as a sovereign, and causing embarrassment to anybody, which is to pay her court to the King at your house, as it would not be impossible for this lovely Princess to excite envy; but I trust she will find a good friend in you. This is a long letter for a woman who is not at her ease, but who does not honour you the less for it.

P.S. The Countess de Soissons, who is at Lyons, has requested of me, through a gentleman who saw her there, to recommend her to your friendly notice; but I promised nothing, thus leaving you always at liberty to act as you please without giving a denial. She has a great desire that the King would have the goodness to permit her to place herself in any convent at Paris his Majesty may think proper. As I do not know why it was wished that she should remain where she is, I have abstained from saying anything about it; but if her intentions were liable to suspicion, she would be much more capable of doing mischief upon the frontiers than at Paris, where she will be subject to be overlooked. You will do me the honour of returning me such an answer upon this subject as you may judge proper; I once saw her very beautiful, this caused her misfortunes, but did not diminish her prudence, which will be her best recommendation to you.

LETTER CLV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 10th, 1709.

We certainly have not now very pleasant topics to discuss; however, I am still more sorry when I receive no letters from you, than in reading an account of all the misfortunes by which France is assailed, and, moreover, all those which you still predict; because your silence gives me more pain than your complaints, knowing that you carry your ideas beyond the worst that one could possibly imagine to happen, and you are ingenious in tormenting yourself. I own, however, that our disasters are very great, and that you have at present only too many causes for grief, if peace should be made upon those frightful terms which the enemy wishes to impose. We are so alarmed at the idea, that I cannot conceive it will be bought at this price, and that the King's subjects will not make a sacrifice of everything in their power, to prevent France from experiencing such a disgrace, and so good a sovereign such deep chagrin. There is nobody in Spain who is unacquainted with the formidable pretensions of the league, and the blow it aims at this monarchy. I leave you to judge what effect all this is calcu-

lated to produce, and the situation of their Catholic Majesties; but I think it wonderful, that although they are very sensible of it they are not dejected; the King is quite occupied with preparations to defend himself alone, in case the King, his grandfather, withdraws his support, and without which it will be very difficult to preserve Spain. You press me to remain here, thinking that I should not be useless to their Majesties, and the Queen having occasion for some one to console her. The elevation of her soul, and her good sense, will suggest to her, better than I could, all the means of alleviating her chagrin, and I should fear to aggravate it, by the distrust that would be excited in the Spaniards, in seeing me so honoured by the confidence of their Majesties, a dependant as I am of the King; hence they would pretend, when everything did not proceed as they wished, to complain that it was always the spirit of France which governed by my insinuations: for these reasons, I foresee that it will be necessary to prevent them harbouring such injurious suspicions. My affection for a Princess, and a Prince, who honour me with so many marks of kindness, do not allow me to prefer their service to every other consideration. I shall have the honour of explaining myself still more at large to you upon this subject, after you have informed me of the success of M. de Torcy's negociation. I agree with you that the King and Queen may

see many revolutions, young as they are; the probabilities are even in favour of it, for the house of Austria is not so numerous as to hope to preserve the empire many years, together with this monarchy; but the hope of seeing a crown, once lost, recovered, is but a poor consolation.

Marshal d'Harcourt is too able a man not to have obtained all that was requisite before his departure: I could wish that Marshal de Villars had done as much, the terms of the peace would not be so disadvantageous.

I cannot help being surprised, that the Princess de Conti should be less afflicted than Madame the Princess, although I have long since discovered that the world is incomprehensible. Rank, when it causes dissensions amongst the Princes and Princesses of the blood, cannot but be deplorable; and it would be desirable that every one should join in thinking about nothing else but remedying the present evils, and preventing fresh sources of uneasiness to the King, who is already too much overwhelmed with it. He certainly would not be the last to know of my quitting Madrid, provided I did so. All the lords are more gracious to me now than they have ever been, and nothing has transpired upon the subject in any way. I shall take care to inform you of everything, since it is my duty, and my affection prompts me to it. You will always find me, Madam, with an entire devotedness, wholly yours.

LETTER CLVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 12th, 1709.

At length, Madam, the enemy himself has opposed obstacles to the King with regard to the peace, by attempting to impose tyrannical and disgraceful terms, and to which it is impossible that good subjects like the French should ever have consented; but their courage and zeal should be re-animated by such proceedings. What would they all become, if the war was concluded by their degradation? I hope God will punish the arrogance of those who thus wish to depress us. Their Catholic Majesties appear to redouble their affection for the King, their grandfather; and considering everything he suffers for maintaining them upon the throne, they easily conceive the need he has for his troops in Spain, in defence of his own kingdom; nevertheless they entreat his Majesty to leave them twenty battalions in Arragon, out of the fifty which are there; these will be in their pay, and they will only retain them until they are able to send infantry into that quarter, which is much wanting, because his Catholic Majesty depended upon the army that Marshal de Besons commanded. I doubt not,

Madam, but you will employ your good offices upon this occasion, as they rely much upon your friendship. I have seen the condescension with which the King, in his despatch to the ambassador, allows me either to remain, or to return from this place; being, however, persuaded that my services would be useful to their Catholic Majesties, but leaving me to exercise my own opinion on the subject. After maturely weighing what might be best for their service, I have concluded, Madam, that it will be better for me to depart, lest the Spaniards, seeing me possess the confidence of the King and Queen, should lay to my charge everything which their Majesties might omit doing to please them; and that it would be an ostensible motive to conceal their intentions, and the jealousy they harbour against each other, which is but too common in courts. I have as yet only disclosed my intentions to the ambassador, for the Queen's situation is such at present, that I feel it painful to announce it to her, and it will be still worse when she is confined, in which chagrin might be attended with bad consequences, and I cannot doubt but she would experience it. I shall even confide to you, that after learning what the King wrote to M. Amelot concerning me, this Princess, and the King, being alone in their apartment, did me the honour of declaring, with tears in their eyes, and embracing me at the same time, how unhappy they would be if I should

ever leave them. You will easily conceive the impression this made upon my heart, but the more affection I feel for their Majesties, the more mindful should I be of their interests, and I think you will not blame this delicacy of sentiment; you who think yourself obliged to have at least a fever when you reflect on the misfortunes of the two Kings. I shall adopt such measures as I think best calculated to obtain the consent of their Majesties to my departure.

The death of M. de la Tremouille has been very sudden. Madame has written to the Queen to say that the physicians killed him by bleeding. There was no particular friendship between us; I respected him as the senior of our house, and what pleased me more in him was his attachment to the King. I am very glad that the Prince of Tarentum has likewise the honour of serving his Majesty, and I am truly sensible of that which you do me by your compliment upon this subject.

It requires all the strength of mind the King possesses, not to be dejected, and to continue in health; it is almost the only consolation which we now have. Take every care of yours, Madam, that you possibly can, and never cease a single moment esteeming a woman who admires and is perfectly devoted to you.

LETTER CLVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 16th, 1709.

I DID myself the honour, Madam, of writing to you, both by the ordinary post and the express, and I now do so by the return of a courier from the Duke of Alba, whom the King of Spain despatches sooner than he would have done, in order to reiterate his request to the King for twenty battalions to be left, which he will take into his pay, to be employed in this campaign against the troops of the Archduke; this corps meeting with no obstacle but Spanish cavalry, in case the fifty French battalions were withdrawn, would easily enter Arragon and penetrate into Castile. His Catholic Majesty and M. Amelot understand each other so well, as to the misfortunes which would ensue, both on his own account and that of France, that I cannot doubt but his Majesty will grant this succour to the King, his grandson; for which reason it is superfluous to say more on the subject, and I shall, therefore, pass on to another of not much less importance.

When the ambassador applied for his recall, his reasons were, that a peace was about to be made

by abandoning Spain; and that in such case their Catholic Majesties, having no other resource than in the fidelity of their subjects, intended to place all their reliance upon it, and thus to deprive them of every pretext for not acting well, owing to the jealousy they entertain against the French government, or rather the desire they have of a commanding station; for in other respects, they generally agree that Charles V. had not so many troops as there are at present, and they believe they dream when they reflect upon what they see has been done to support this country. The ambassador then must change his sentiments, as the war is continued; knowing as he does, that his wise and disinterested counsels are now more useful and necessary to the King of Spain than they have ever been. Allow me, therefore, the honour of telling you, that it appears to me of the utmost consequence, that the King grants him permission to remain at this court, as long as the King of Spain and himself shall see the necessity of it. It is necessary for us to be frank to each other, without been buoyed up by illusions or dejected by adversity, as it will be the means of setting bounds to our misfortunes, and rendering us more successful in future. Cardinal Portocarero told me again this morning, in presence of their Majestics, that a worse thing could not be done than to change the government in the present conjuncture; which opinion has been confirmed to me by

some of the grandees, and they are those who have declared themselves the most unequivocally on this occasion to be well disposed. You will, perhaps, be surprised at my change of sentiment since my last letter; but I have seriously reflected; I do not think I am deceived, and I have still less a wish that the King should embark in affairs which might be disagreeable to him, since his satisfaction will always be mine, and he cannot have a more faithful or zealous subject.

LETTER CLVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 24th, 1709.

You have told me great news, Madam, and I am not astonished that the circumstance of M. de Chamillard being succeeded by M. Voisins has thrown your court into great agitation. You praise the exiled minister for being a good man, and for loving the King, which are points that do not appear to me to enhance his merits. How could he help loving his king and so good a sovereign? And if he had only his goodness to boast of, was this enough for all that he had to do to govern France and superintend the finance so many years, when the wisest of mankind would have

had a difficulty in holding up their heads, in so terrible a period as that which has elapsed during his ministry? I take the liberty of requesting you to give me a little more intelligible explanation upon this subject, provided, nevertheless, you can do it, for I am not so ill-informed as to be very anxious about any more.

As it is very usual to trample upon people who are cast down, faults of every kind will be imputed to M. de Chamillard, as well with respect to the unaccounted millions, whose employment he could not superintend, as the magazines and other things which he said would be found, and which was not the case; to which may be added, that the troops were all discontented with him. The Spaniards, who assert he was first and foremost for abandoning Spain, and withdrawing all the French troops, are delighted at his fall, and only regret that it did not take place sooner. For my part, the unfortunate, without bad intentions, always excite my pity. I have heard much good of M. and Madame Voisins, and am very glad that they have the honour of being your friends as you say. It is fortunate, whatever may happen, that the King has made choice of a man generally approved; but it is deplorable that he finds everything in such disorder.

I am not astonished that French blood has shown itself on an occasion which would have debased it, since it is certain that so frightful

a peace as that which the enemy wished to make, would have dishonoured France. It is, however, said, that it is the people rather who were irritated at it than the majority of the nobles. But, Madam, can we really promise ourselves that the war will be continued, and may there not be some mystery under this apparent resolution of continuing it? In fact, abandoned as the King of Spain is, ought to make us fear it, since without that they will expose him to the danger which he is about to encounter, after Marshal de Besons shall have withdrawn all the King's troops. Besides this misfortune, the frontiers of France, on the side of Spain, would soon be covered with enemies, enraged at the ill-treatment they would have received, at a time they so little expected or deserved it. M. Amelot has doubtless enlarged upon the reflections suggested to him by this subject, in his letters to the King. All who have been the first, and with so good a grace, to send their plate to the mint, are highly to be commended; and his Majesty is still more entitled to praise, for setting so good an example of retrenchment in his own household, and consenting to pledge the crown jewels: what sacrifice can be sufficiently great in his behalf? The Duchess of Burgundy, who is not less magnanimous than the Queen, her sister, does not place her grandeur in dress, since nature has adorned her with virtue and charms, and she does not require the sparkling of diamonds to

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enhance her loveliness; her eyes are sufficiently brilliant, for I do not think there are more beautiful ones in the world. The Chevalier de Saint-George cannot do better than to remain inactive. Somebody told me that the King of Sweden was affected at his fate, and that he might find an asylum in his dominions, because his Britannic Majesty, by the treaty of peace, could no longer remain in France, and would be obliged to throw himself under the protection of an heretical King. What an unfortunate destiny, is it possible that there was any foundation for this news! But I do not see much probability in it; I see more in that of this royal family carrying its misfortunes with it into some catholic country, where it may live until it shall please God to change its situation: I have so much respect and attachment for it, that every time I think of the subject I am heartily grieved: I shall have, perhaps, many other causes for being still more so.

It is not worth while taking the trouble of correcting the silly surmises of some wretches, who assert that the King sells corn to enrich himself, by selling it at a high price. He indeed to be capable of such baseness! The locusts begin to leave Spain, for Egypt probably; at least few are seen but in the environs of Madrid, and but a small number there, and which do but little damage: I should like them better to pay a visit to the magazines of the English and Dutch. Your wishes that the King

of Spain may be able to maintain himself alone may be good, but I should think them more efficient were they to imply that the French battalions which we request of you, by joining the Spaniards, might beat the Archduke.

You have in vain asserted it, Madam, you shall not die, but I hope that you will live many years in health, should fortune grow weary of tormenting you.

I know not why you should prefer the situation of M. Chamillard to that of Marshal de Villeroi; for my part, leaving the dignities of the latter out of the question, I should much prefer being in his place, to that of the other; but I cannot complain of mine, so long as you are pleased to honour me with your friendship.

LETTER CLIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 1st, 1709.

It depends only upon you, Madam, to appease me, or to prevent me from scolding. Let the King have the goodness to leave the twenty battalions in Spain which his Catholic Majesty requests of him, and we shall be satisfied. If he sent the thirty others to the Duke de Noailles, it

would be enhancing the favour; for, with such a reinforcement, he would form an army strong enough to enter Catalonia, which diversion in a country heartily tired of the Archduke, would determine this Prince, who is far from being at his ease there, to quit Spain. Will you not conceive, Madam, how beneficial such an event would be to France? It would seem as if the strengthening his Catholic Majesty upon his throne were always considered as an obstacle to peace, and that for this reason it has never been wished to do the needful to finish the affair. Nevertheless, Madam, you would have soon seen the enemy less arrogant, and not so insolent as to require of the King such outrageous terms as they do; and most assuredly the means of bringing him to reason will not be by shewing our weakness, for the more they see us depressed, the more will their arrogance increase. I cannot help, Madam, feeling my blood boil with anger, when I reflect on the position to which they aim at reducing France, and when I think that all the money in the hands of capitalists does not make its appearance to supply the wants of the state. I would fain hope that the hardness of their hearts will not continue.

I prize highly a general who is not dispirited, although inferior in force. Marshal de Villars, who idolizes his profession, and is fond of glory, flatters himself with obtaining similar success to many others who have commanded weaker armies,

and who have, notwithstanding, been victorious. Why should not that happen to him?

I beg you not to repent of the passage in your last letter, in which you do me the honour of hinting at the manner in which the ambassador and I have lived. Although you add, that you do not know why you have touched upon this subject, I should be very sorry if you had not done it, since it is a great comfort to me, to learn that the King is satisfied with my conduct, and I shall endeavour through life to deserve the honour of his esteem. Were it possible for you to witness my actions, I presume to flatter myself that they would, from morning to evening, meet your approbation, and increase your kindness and friendship for me, and for which my heart will feel inexpressible gratitude during life.

I appreciate the reasons you alledge, why the Countess de Soissons should not come to Paris, easily conceiving that her presence might be disagreeable to the Duchess of Burgundy. I even think that being vain, she would do better to hide her misery further off, than to go and shew it near a court in which she has filled different stations. It does not even appear why this Princess should not find herself at her ease at Lyons in a good convent; however, I do not know but she would prefer one nearer Paris, if she had permission to make her choice.

M. Amelot will write a circumstantial account

to-day of the alteration made by the King in his *despacho*. The ambassador is now released from all business, having entirely given up the war and financial department. The King and Queen, out of regard to their grandfather, and their satisfaction with the ambassador, who has so well served them, have wished him to continue entering the *despacho*, during the time he remains here, and no one, as it should appear, disapproves it. He supports everything he does with a wisdom, equanimity, and firmness, which attract the praise even of those who do not like to lavish it upon the French, and he is considered as a minister whom the King, his master, may safely employ anywhere. I know not, Madam, if he is thus regarded with you; I could wish him to be as well known there as I have the honour of knowing him.

LETTER CLX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 2d, 1709.

THE Queen has just been confined, and has experienced much more difficulty than the first time; the appearance of the child would induce a belief that she has not gone her full time; it made no effort, and Clement, in a word, doubts whether

it will live; we attribute this misfortune to the agitation of her Majesty since yesterday evening, when it was perceived that the Prince of Asturias had the small-pox. Her Majesty only consulted her feelings on this occasion, and whatever we said, she neither thought of herself nor of the child unborn. There was, however, no ground for her fears, since the small-pox of the Prince is of a mild kind, and not in the least dangerous. I am so much affected at the great sufferings of the Queen, that I cannot add more, nor even do myself the honour of writing to the King. I beg you to represent this to his Majesty.

LETTER CLXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 5th, 1709.

You have taken care, Madam, to communicate to me, by your letter of the 24th ult. the King's determination to withdraw all his troops from Spain; but you have not taken the trouble to tell me, that he had changed this resolution, and left twenty-five battalions, which his Catholic Majesty had requested of him as an object of the first importance; I cannot suspect you, notwithstanding your silence, of not being

over glad at the King having given this proof of kindness to the King, his grandson, although you assured me you wished to see him dethroned: and we are not ignorant here, that for a long time past, every possible effort has been made to induce his Majesty absolutely to abandon him. I entreat you to pardon me, Madam, for not believing you when you say that you wish the crown was wrested from their Catholic Majesties; the generosity of your heart, and the rectitude of your mind, cannot inspire you with such sentiments; you have spoken to me on this subject like persons labouring under a misfortune, who say—"I wish I was dead!" without thinking that they would be very sorry to see death make his approaches. I therefore announce to you, that if you continue to hold forth in such a frightful strain, I shall put no more faith in it than I do at this hour. I have had the honour of communicating to you the Queen's confinement, and the poor hopes we had of preserving the life of the infant; but our opinion is changed, and it is probable that this little Prince will not die, because he takes to the breast, sleeps very well, and performs all his other functions. His brother is almost cured of the small-pox, although he had a pretty good share of it. The King's physician and Queen's surgeon are shut up in his apartment, where I should also have taken my station, had not my presence been necessary to the Queen, because she would have

been left quite alone. Her Majesty is as well as it is possible for her to be, and her joy at the King having left some troops in Spain has very much contributed to her health. She dare not, she says, ask for the infant to be brought to her, to see it, for fear of loving and losing it: it is very pretty, more especially its mouth, which is astonishingly small. I do myself the honour of writing to the Duchess of Burgundy an account of the Queen, her sister, and I take the liberty of addressing to her my letters for the Royal Duchesses, as I did at the Queen's first confinement, by following your counsels. It was very fortunate that M. Clement, and Madame de la Salle, were here to attend her Majesty, for she had great need of skilful persons like them. I am returning to her, for I think I cannot please you better than in doing my duty.

LETTER CLXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 9th, 1709.

The ray of hope which we had of preserving the life of the infant soon vanished; he was seized with convulsions last evening, and the little angel

went to heaven a little before midnight. Although there was but little hope of his getting the better of his weakness, and being cured of a tumour which he had, there was some ground for it, so long as he took to the breast as well as he did; but God has been pleased to send this new mortification to the King of Spain, who has received the blow with Christian fortitude, although he is much affected at it, for you cannot believe how much he loves his children; but his affection for the Queen makes him endeavour to conceal his grief; and I have admired the violence which he does to himself to appear as cheerful before her as if nothing disastrous had happened. It is true that I had the honour of representing to his Majesty, that it would be a death-blow to the Queen, the sixth day after her confinement, to appear before her with a melancholy countenance, which would make her surmise the cause of our affliction. I have used all possible precautions to prevent her knowing the loss she has sustained, until there is less danger in announcing it to her; but I fear imprudencies, and his Majesty has but too much evinced his sensibility. The Prince is recovering fast from the small-pox. I cannot do myself the honour of dwelling longer upon these gloomy topics: I shall not have that of writing to the King, the Dauphin, nor the Duchess of Burgundy. You will be so good as to tell them what you think proper, which you will do better than I could myself.

LETTER CLXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, July 24th, 1709.

I DID not do myself the honour of writing to you, Madam, three days ago by the post, because I thought of doing it by the return of a courier, which the Duke of Alba had despatched to the King of Spain, who was to return immediately, but who is still here; and I keep this letter, ready to deliver to him when he departs. I had the honour of writing to the Duchess of Burgundy an account of the Queen's grief, on announcing to her the death of the infant, which is not abated so much as I could wish, and as I think it ought to be, in considering that the Prince, whom her Majesty so much regrets, would have been only an object of affliction for the King and her, which you will learn from M. Clement. The Queen's grief hurts her health, and she has lost in four days all the benefit she received at the beginning of her confinement; which will convince you, Madam, that our two Princesses have hearts too susceptible to be happy. It is true that it is not on this account alone, that they are to be pitied, each of them having too many other sources of grief; but you will own that the sorrows of the

Duchess of Burgundy are alleviated by amusements, diversions, and the King's kindnesses, without taking into account your own assiduities. The Queen has no other consolation than the friendship and virtue of the King, her husband, for in other respects she no longer knows what joy is; and if her Majesty had not been endowed from her cradle with natural cheerfulness and firmness of mind, I think she could not live in the midst of such strange and disorderly scenes.

Marshal de Boufflers asserts then that M. de Chamillard is not a good man, because he has brought ruin upon the state: you are not of the same opinion, and only impute his faults to his incapacity. However, it may be, he is no longer minister, and it is only desirable that his successor should continue as well as he has begun, but the times are not in his favour.

Would it not be possible, Madam, if Tournay should make a stout resistance, for Marshal de Villars to strike a blow at the enemy? I am persuaded that an action of some consequence would be capable of producing good effects; because it would let him know that the courage of Frenchmen is not degenerated, and that they are still formidable when well commanded.

July 18th.

I received your large packet yesterday by the post, which contained your letter and that of Mar-

shal de Villeroi. I see, Madam, that he is of your opinion as to the present state of France, and the necessity of making peace, to which I have nothing to reply, when bread and money are absolutely wanting, which you say is the case. I could wish for some elucidations respecting the want of money. Do you mean to say that there is none, or that there are no means discovered of making it circulate? If there is no specie, I have nothing to say, and submission must follow to the hardest terms of the enemy; but if, on the contrary, the monied men are richer than ever, I cannot excuse their treasures not being forthcoming, to be employed in the preservation of the public weal. Can you be left in ignorance of all the prodigious sums which the French have brought from the Indies? I cannot think that the King is aware of it, nevertheless, it is a fact. What has become of this money? Have the taxes upon the people been diminished in consequence of its arrival, and has his Majesty derived any benefit from it? I am convinced that individuals have alone been the gainers, which has only served to alienate the Spaniards from us. As to corn, it is asserted, that the last year's produce was more than enough for the consumption of this, if a great quantity had not been suffered to be exported, which appears to me the more deplorable from the difficulty of remedying the evil. Neither can I pardon you, Madam, for desiring that their

Catholic Majesties may be dethroned; you have a hundred wishes to make without that, and you might, I should think, make some for the preservation of their crown, notwithstanding the deserted state in which the King may feel himself obliged to leave his grandson. He will not make his peace sooner with his enemies, although they should know he gives him no assistance; and that it would not be his fault, if he could not oblige the King of Spain to cut his own throat, by renouncing a monarchy over which he has reigned nine years, and whose subjects will have him, cost what it may. I do not think, Madam, that the King has a more faithful, zealous, and submissive subject than I am; my heart is filled with a gratitude, if I might presume to say it, without a breach of respect, which would oblige me to lay down my life, if it could promote his happiness. But permit me to have the honour of confiding to you, that I would lose it, without hesitation, rather than give the King and Queen advice contrary to what appears to me to be their true glory. I am far from making a mystery of it to you, or to any one; I will have nothing to reproach myself with, and I am incapable of abusing the confidence, with which I am honoured by their Catholic Majesties, and the goodness of the King my master. With such feelings, do I not act properly in deciding to withdraw from this country although his Majesty has granted me the favour to act as

I think proper. I have already had the honour of speaking to the King of Spain, who will not willingly consent to it; but I have not yet ventured to make the proposal to the Queen in her present situation. Meanwhile, I am decided, after maturely reflecting upon everything which might happen. I entreat you to mention it only to the King, and our friend, whose letter you have forwarded to me; he is prudent and discreet, and I have steps to take before my intention transpires. I will impart to you, at a future opportunity, my intended plan of life when I shall quit this country; and I hope it will meet your approbation, otherwise I should think it bad, for I am too much devoted to you, and have too high an opinion of your mind and heart, not to regard you as a generous friend, who should conduct me in my path, to prevent me from stumbling.

As the Queen will write herself to the Duchess of Burgundy, concerning the news of the day, I shall abstain from having that honour. Her Majesty has no longer been able to withstand the inclination to embrace the Prince, and the King was equally glad to see him; the small-pox and his teeth have made him thinner, his complexion is naturally good; he eats heartily, and is in good health.

The Chancellor of Milan, whom Madame de Caylus honours with her protection, and for whom you interest yourself, with that vivacity which I

know you to possess, was formerly minister of finances at Madrid, from which department he was dismissed, and it was lately confided to another For this reason, Madam, it would be absolutely useless to speak in his behalf; I have always been disposed to render him good offices, thinking him an honest man, and being convinced that an enemy of his, whom I know, acted rather through passion against him than for the public good. Were I in his place, I would live in repose, until the affairs of this court are brought to a conclusion; in which case there would be many changes, and he might, perhaps, find some place to better his fortune.

You know now the nature of the cabal, and their projects; I will say no more to you about them at present; you are just and good, which is enough for me and the ambassador.

July 28th.

I break open my letter, for I conceal nothing from you, to inform you that the Queen was up the whole of yesterday, amusing herself with the playful tricks of the Prince of Asturias. Her Majesty went to bed at nine o'clock in the evening, with a head-ache, which increased very much, and she had the remainder of the night a violent attack of fever, weariness in the legs, and perspirations. Her Majesty's pulse is still very quick, although not so dense; the doctor hopes it will prove an ephemeral fever, which, however, causes

anxiety, after a confinement and afflictions that have depressed her Majesty so much. I thought it right to say nothing of this attack to the Duchess of Burgundy, in the letter which I do myself the honour of writing to her; I only mention the Queen's head-ache, which prevents her from writing herself.

July 29th.

I open my letter a second time, to relieve you from your anxiety, on hearing of the high fever with which the Queen was attacked; it had very much abated this evening at seven o'clock, and her Majesty will be soon quite rid of it, which gives me a little breathing time.

LETTER CLXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 5th, 1709.

I TRULY thought, Madam, that you would participate in the King and Queen's grief, since it is well founded, and so good a disposition as their Majesties possess, renders them still more estimable to you. Thanks to God, they begin to know that he has done them a service, in taking to himself a Prince, whom the King and Queen

could not have seen with an infirmity, without being afflicted at it. They always give way to reason, for it has a great influence upon their minds.

I have too much evinced my sensibility in my last letter, respecting your wishes that their Catholic Majesties were dethroned, to revive the subject; you have but too well explained it in one of your letters, and I would copy the passage, which is not equivocal, should you wish it. But, Madam, let this matter rest; you have had your reasons, and the present state of France compels you to sacrifice everything in the hope of preventing utter ruin. You are certainly to be pitied, and I suffer as much as yourself from your troubles; but I have in addition, those of a King and Queen, whose virtues I know better than you do, and for whom my affection cannot be surpassed. I am not so incredulous as to doubt what you do me the honour of telling me, as I know nobody of more undoubted veracity than yourself, and that you would prefer being silent even to disguising what you think, when you cannot express them. Whenever it has happened that I appeared to lend a deaf ear to what you wished me to believe, it was not because I distrusted your discernment, or your intentions, which are equally correct, but merely to try to re-animate by my reasons, good or bad, the dejected hearts of so many persons,

who think all lost while there are still many resources remaining; and it cannot be denied, if the last campaign had not been so deplorable, everything would have assumed a different aspect. The Duchess of Burgundy acts very prudently in keeping her bed through precaution, and I am very glad that M. Clement is with her; we shall soon send you back Madame de la Salle.

Whatever change may await the Duchess, nothing can hinder her from pleasing, since her mind, grace, and obliging manners will remain.

I am sorry that you could not communicate to me all that prudence obliges you to conceal, for it would be very necessary for me to know it, having strong presumption of what it may relate to. The Duke and Duchess of Alba, distinguished for their ardent zeal for their Majesties, are well persuaded of it, and they will give them on every occasion proofs of their esteem and gratitude.

Since you do me the honour of assuring me that your esteem for me is accompanied with your friendship, nothing that I see or may fear can abate my courage and render me so unhappy as I should be, were I deprived of so precious and delightful a source of consolation.

LETTER CLXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 11th, 1708.

From the manner, Madam, in which you do me the honour of writing to me, by your letter of the 29th ultimo, about the siege of Tournay, it will not hold out so long as it would be necessary to occupy the enemy until the end of the campaign. We hear from that quarter, that the loss of the enemy is very great, owing to its good defence, and the number of mines, which the besiegers very much dread. The conduct of Marshal de Villars, and the good disposition of his troops, are likewise commended; and it is considered as not one of the worst measures for France, that M. de Marlborough has attacked Tournay. Marshal de Berwick does not appear to me to fear the efforts of the Duke of Savoy, and I hear from him by every post. I think the Germans will do no great injury to the Duke d'Harcourt. Thus the war proceeds better than was expected; and it might be hoped that things would wear a better aspect, if it were not for that scarcity of money which you represent; but if it cannot be procured, and corn be also so very scarce, I cannot conceive a remedy for it, and in this case I anticipate with grief, like your-

self, all the misfortunes which must follow, and I shall take good care not to dispute your just reasons.

The cry against me here is known at Paris, founded upon the imprisonment of Flot and Renaud; I have been warned by many of it, and others belonging to this court have sent an account of it to their friends. It must be confessed that mine is a strange destiny; to be continually the object of enmity to those who are ill-disposed to their Catholic Majesties, because I am faithful to them, and my zeal in their behalf, and that of the King, makes me considered as an obstacle to their unjust designs. These two prisoners have imprudently talked with so many Spaniards of what they should have concealed from themselves, that this alone would be more than sufficient for my justification, had I need of any. But, Madam, I am too zealous to fail in the profound respect which I owe; and having nothing, thank God, to reproach myself with, principally on this account, I shall remain as I am, observing a strict silence, and merely contenting myself with the honour of representing to you, that oppressed as I am, without having deserved it, it appears to me, that I may expect, from the same extreme goodness of the King, as well as his justice, that he will impose silence as to me, and that he will be pleased to evince, by some hints in my favour, which his Majesty knows how to give opportunely, that

It was thought that Tournay would hold o[redacted]t longer than it has done; you have no opinion [redacted] of the citadel making a good defence: we he[redacted]r, however, from Flanders, that it is well supplie[redacted]d; the dearness of bread is astonishing, notwithstan[redacted]d-ing you say there is plenty of corn in Paris. Y[redacted]u fear a peace still worse than the one that has be[redacted]n offered, at which, however, every body was ind[redacted]g-nant; you have an army of a hundred thousand well disposed men, commanded by a general, bo[redacted] even to audacity; you calculated that if you coul[redacted] hold out until the month of August, there would be no want of money; I confess that all this is incomprehensible to me, and that I have not wisdom enough to unravel so many inconsistencies. We shall soon lose the ambassador, whom the King and Queen, hoped would have remained, at least as long as the French troops; and in truth, let me have the honour of telling you, that it was highly proper he should do so. This minister will be a great loss to the affairs of their Catholic Majesties; all worthy people, who are attached to him, will regret him: he has neglected nothing for the support of the war in this country, with the view of making a good peace. If his example had been followed in France, allow me to have the honour of telling you, that you would not be as you are, and that we should be much better off. I perceive that my thoughts, are not more cheerful than your own; it is not right to continue them,

when I could wish to take to my own account the greater part of your troubles, desiring nothing more ardently than the satisfaction and preservation of the most estimable and amiable friend that I ever knew.

P.S. I beseech you to pardon me at having forgotten, to offer you my most humble congratulations, upon the King of Spain having granted the order of the Golden Fleece to M. de Listenay. Although I have often taken the liberty of reproaching you for your indifference, respecting persons who have the honour of being related to you, I cannot think so ill of you as to suspect that you will be wholly indifferent to distinctions which they may obtain, and in which you have taken no part, but that of being what you are, with merit so great as to cause your relatives to be noticed. I do not know whether Madame de Mailly will have received a letter from me upon this subject, on which I congratulated her.

LETTER CLXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 25th, 1709.

The sacrifice is made, Madam, and I have had the courage to announce to the Queen, that I

was no longer an ambas
their displeasure. They
in the manner I had forese
have made me better acqu
ness of their hearts. I sha
care not to impart to you
Queen have done me the h
on this occasion, as I shoul
and you have no occasion fo
nor of compassionating a P
fortunes you are so sensibly
to consider as one of her gr
services. I begin no longer
tion, although it is not yet pu
will be shortly; I have som
sorry, some grandees who
some who will not know wh
There will be much bustle a

may return. The difficulty will be in
g a good choice, notwithstanding the merit
ladies who may pretend to this honour. I
wish at least for a woman, who might attach
' sincerely to the Queen, and be watchful
ıe life of a Prince, who is so dear to her and
ıould have no other interests at heart than
of their Majesties. I could pardon in her
lefects, provided, nevertheless, she was not
:some, nor possessing those little exterior
ıns which marked the conduct of the late
ss de Bejar, who never entered the room,
t their Majesties requesting her to leave it;
ınversation was gloomy, and larded with
ments, which gave the King the vapours,
: Queen a sick head-ache. The ambassador,
grave air, failed not to enliven business, and
h when he had finished speaking of it, or
ess serious matter became the subject of
ıation.

my part, my natural cheerfulness often
l itself, and their Majesties and I never
o pass some moments with pleasure: the
calculates upon having no more, at which
ruly sorry, and to divert her from the idea
agreeable projects, and represent to her,
er, that her youth, and great mind, will
ıer sources of unexpected felicity. The
ıf Spain and this Princess are extremely
assed in losing the ambassador, not knowing

who to choose to undertake what he did: he is decisive and expeditious, takes little rest, and allows but little more to others; and one may say, without flattering him, that he has preserved Spain, since he has executed the orders of his Catholic Majesty on the most important affairs. Thus you will see, by a letter which the King of Spain writes to the King, his gratitude for the essential services the ambassador has rendered him, and the distinguished proof which his Majesty wishes to give him of it, by conferring the title of grandee on the person who shall marry his daughter, whom he affectionately loves; not being able to invest M. Amelot with this dignity, who, besides, is indifferent to all sorts of titles, which increases the estimation in which he is held, and excites a greater desire to honour his family. I am incapable of awkward finesse, and am vain enough to believe that I think of nothing, but what I may communicate to persons whom I honour the most; therefore, I shall make no ceremony in confiding to you, that it is I who proposed to the King and Queen, the Count de Chalais, my nephew, to establish his claims to the title in question. He is a virtuous and prudent young man, which has always made me love him, and desire his advancement; his birth is not in any degree inferior to that of all the grandees which the King has requested his Catholic Majesty to make. The eldest brothers of his

house, of which he is the principal, may boast of never having made an alliance below their own rank, and I think there are few persons of rank in France, who can better prove their antiquity than he, nor show by title deeds, that his paternal ancestors were Counts of Perigord and d'Augoumois, in the time of Hugh Capet. You know too well the history of our Kings, to be unacquainted with the figure these counts then made, who by too boundless an ambition rendered themselves sovereigns of these provinces, and formed alliances with crowned heads. I should not have extolled a name which I have borne, had not the present object rendered it necessary, as it appears to me that the King should know it is not unworthy of the honour which their Majesties intend to confer upon him. I confess to you that I shall be infinitely sensible of it, and that in the present conjuncture of my affairs, the King's kindness will be a great consolation to me. I presume to hope for it, if you will be pleased to state my reasons: I entreat you not to refuse me this additional proof of your friendship, and believe that you can oblige no one, whose affectionate attachment to you is greater than mine.

P.S. This letter is already so long, that the fear of importuning you, induces me to postpone till the next post, what I have to say upon my ulterior plans after leaving Spain, and as to the time of my departure. I should not forget o[illegible]rv-

ing to you, that a complaint in the chest, with which M. de Chalais has been much troubled, incapacitated him from serving in the navy, in which he was the captain of a frigate, and in which service he had been from his youth; he is now in better health, and might marry a lady, who, I am assured has been very well brought up, amongst the duaghters of the visitation at Paris, and who is not less amiable.

LETTER CLXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, August 30th, 1709.

I CONTINUE, Madam, in the resolution of leaving this, in order not to afford the Spaniards the slightest grounds for suspecting that their Catholic Majesties may do me the honour of asking my advice. They must be deprived of every pretext for not doing their duty, and whatever may happen, the public will not have to complain that a Frenchwoman has kept back the good disposition of their subjects, by different maxims from their own. Their Majesties are still loath to consent to my retirement; I have entreated them to permit me, at least for the present, to go to Aranjuez, where the ambassador is gone, in order to avoid having

anything to do with all these fresh beginnings, which will be attended with new innovations: I shall have an eye during this time to the course adopted, and shall be more at liberty to act as I shall think for the best. I could wish that this short absence might habituate their Majesties to think they can dispense with me. This is a very critical time for them; however, Madam, it is not impossible but that miracles may take place; but I know not whether you can believe or will profit by them. The return of the courier, whom the King of Spain despatches this evening, will elucidate the affair. I entreat you to remember, that it is not permitted to neglect the favours of God. With your leave I shall not say more on this topic. All worthy people here regret M. Amelot, because he has won their esteem; he will likewise be regretted by others, when they do not agree together, and all does not proceed to their mind. He knows my feelings and my thoughts upon every subject so well, that he will be better able to explain it to you than I could myself; for which reason allow me, I beseech you, to refer to him, and more particularly when he shall have the honour of making known to you my gratitude, affection, and devotedness to you. From the knowledge I have of your disposition, if it should be your good pleasure to appreciate his merit, you will be highly satisfied with him and I fear not announcing to you that there are few men who possess so many

good qualities as I have discovered in him for more than four years that I have seen the wonders he has performed in this country, without once belying himself. I have only, then, to wish, that the King may judge of M. Amelot by experience, and that he may not deteriorate in a court, where you assure me men are so very imperfect. Nevertheless, there are some whose hearts are not so, and our friend, whom you do me the honour of mentioning, is one of them; of whose attention to me I am as sensible as I ought to be. But it must be confessed, that it is very hard, that persons who interest themselves in what concerns me, should think themselves obliged to work upon your feelings, in order to put you on your guard against what may be invented, equally false and unjust, against me; you, Madam, of whose great goodness there can be no doubt, and who so well know everything that has occurred, it is a sign that the venom is so subtle, that it is to be feared lest it insinuate itself into the most noble part. But what makes me take courage is, that you possess its antidote, and I live in repose when you do me the honour of promising me, that nothing can make you change on my account.

P.S. I send by this courier a memorial to Marshal de Villeroi, which the author wished to be addressed to him; it contains a plan, by which he asserts that the ministers will be enabled to find the money, which the King has need of to

continue the war several years, without burthening the people. I do not presume to tell you, that it appears to me very feasible; but the King, who has had it read to him, thinks it is; and M. Amelot, after examining it, is of opinion that it may succeed, if all the views of the author are comprehended. We have been a long time expecting miracles, and, perhaps, this is one that God sends in our favour. I have received by the last post an anonymous letter, of which I enclose you the copy, as it appeared to me curious enough, for you to see it.

"TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS.

"MADAM,

"The great respect and attachment I have "always entertained for you, induce me to intimate to you, that the principal cause of this fine "project of M. d'Orleans, which you have so "fortunately discovered, was his mistress: she "has never ceased to press it with vehemence, "being irritated against you, because she thinks "you have been the only obstacle to her being appointed a lady of honour to the Queen of Spain; "she has therefore thought of the means of revenging herself; added to which, is her natural "vanity, and the desire she has of acting a great "part in Spain, by governing there with an absolute and haughty sway M. d'Orleans, as she "does here. As I know this to be a fact, I thought

"it my duty to inform you of it, in order that you "might exercise your penetration in the way "you think proper, to prevent the misfortunes "which might still occur. I entreat you, Madam, "to be persuaded that no one renders more justice "to such rare merit as yours, nor will honour you "more than I shall do during life."

LETTER CLXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 8th, 1709.

You appear, Madam, by your last letter, of the 25th ultimo, to be pretty well satisfied with affairs in Flanders, and that you are almost free from anxiety for the quarter where the Duke d'Harcourt commands; I, however, am more alarmed on account of this miserable peace, which, it is asserted, is upon the eve of being concluded, and the various perils to which the King of Spain is about to be exposed. There are some of them which I shall pass over in silence, although I look them boldly in the face. We shall soon know at Madrid how the news of the departure of his Majesty has been received by the Marshal de Besons. A great number of Spanish and some French officers, whose names I shall not

mention, in order to avoid injuring them, have written and said, that they were ashamed and scandalized at what the French troops had done, so contrary to the honour of the two nations, and so prejudicial to their Catholic Majesties, since it depended solely on them to establish their throne; which they have shaken, by suffering the enemy to make unwarrantable proposals, and obtain great vantage ground. How can any one, who has the glory of our Kings at heart, not be affected as I am?

It is then insisted upon, that his Catholic Majesty is going off daily in a rapid consumption, that the Prince of Asturias is extremely delicate, and that the Queen is afflicted, at least, with a tumour. I am not astonished that a Royal Family, so unhealthy and unsound, should be made so little account of, as that wishes for its dethronement are allowed, since it is only hastening their deaths a little sooner. In truth, Madam, these poor Princes are much persecuted, and you are much in the right, in not being agreed as to what is disadvantageous to them. The King of Spain is one of the healthiest men in existence, and if he does not break in two an iron horse-shoe, like King Augustus, he has not less strength, but, perhaps, less skill: he is indefatigable in mental and corporeal exercises, and I could wish that all the Princes of the royal family of France were as promising for life as he is. I could wish, nevertheless, that his cheeks had a portion of the fat which the

Duke de Berri's has; this would be a great improvement to both their faces. I know not, however, whether the King would appear to more advantage for it in the eyes of the Queen; but this I know, at least, that she would not love him better for it, since her affection for him is not to be described. This Princess is only troubled with tumours, which swell more or less according to her anxiety, and which visibly diminish when she takes exercise, and can cherish a hope that things will go on better. You will, doubtless, observe to me, that she ought to take the exercise of walking, and you will be surprised when I inform you, that it is very difficult for her to do so. There is only a very miserable garden at this palace, called the Priory, and to arrive at which, it is necessary to descend a hundred and thirty steps. I have got a terrace repaired, which is not so low, and where her Majesty walks after sun-set, because there is no shade. The King and herself intended to pass six weeks at the Retiro, where the gardens are more convenient and extensive: they hesitated very much thus to procure themselves this little enjoyment, because more is paid to the lower servants there than in this house, and their Majesties economise in the merest trifles, in order to support the troops, and set a good example to their subjects; but it is not solely in that which they set it, they discharge their duty towards mankind, and endeavour to do it towards God. The Queen

is fully occupied with both objects, which you may judge of from the particulars I shall give you of the manner of her life, since she has been Regent for the third time. I have the honour of sleeping in her apartment: she rises at six o'clock; after prayers, she writes to the King, then visits the Prince, and returns to breakfast at eight. Couriers often arrive about this time, with despatches from several quarters, which the two secretaries of the *despacho* inform me of, and bring the letters which they have received. Her Majesty confers with them, about their contents, and orders them to be sent to the respective ministers of the departments to which they relate; she then goes to dress as quickly as possible, and whilst her hair is dressing she reads papers. She then hears mass, often high mass, and goes to preside at the council, which usually continues until noon. When her Majesty is informed that dinner is ready, and there are persons who demand an audience, which the Queen does not refuse, before sitting down to table she gives them a patient hearing, and a gracious answer, according to their merits and their birth. Dinner lasts a short half hour, at which I have the honour of waiting. She then goes to her apartment, where Don Jose Grimaldo, and Manuel Bardillo, secretaries of despatches, bring her a great number of papers to examine. She despatches a part of those which are in the common routine of business, and the rest are reserved for a consultation with the ministers. The penance

and prayers of the forty hours are often performed in the chapel, which is close to her Majesty's apartment. She does not omit attending there, nor at vespers, which are performed in this country on the eve of holidays. At five o'clock she takes a slight repast, after which the ladies come and pay their respects to her, twice a week; on Tuesdays, all those who have permission to enter the palace; and on the Fridays her Majesty only receives those who have distinguished themselves by their zeal in accompanying her to Burgos: they remain there about an hour and a half. If the weather is fine, the Queen descends with the Prince to the terrace, the latter of whom return to supper about seven o'clock. The Queen afterwards sups, and again gives audience to those who may apply. Besides all this, there is a public one for the people, and other persons of the middle ranks; and on Friday morning there is a consultation, that is to say a sitting of the council of Castile, which is presided by the president: after having said, in presence of the old counsellors, who compose it, what is necessary for the Queen to know, the President, Don Francisco Rouquillo, goes alone with her Majesty into another apartment, in order to arrange many important objects. The Queen often receives letters from the King, which you may easily conceive are answered by herself. The remainder of the evening is spent in giving various orders. After ten o'clock, she retires

into her closet, to read devotional books, then goes to prayers, and afterwards to rest, which is not always as tranquil as I could wish. Such is, Madam, a very correct account, but not very amusing, of her proceedings; which, however, I thought, you would not be sorry to learn, as those of a Princess who has not yet completed her twenty-first year, entitled by her birth to the enjoyments of life; but who, nevertheless, knows how to confine herself to the discharge of her duties, by such varied and tiresome efforts. This is very different from the amusements which may be enjoyed with the five pretty ladies, whose portrait you have given me.

Is there no way, Madam, of knowing the cause of all this fury against me? How can I, and why am I, to be implicated in such a business? Were it not for the respect which I owe, I should be very capable of defending myself; and I assure you that it requires great self-controul to be silent when one sees herself sacrificed, and has it in her power, by speaking, to prove herself whiter than the snow. I have not, however, so good an opinion of my fortitude, as to presume to flatter myself always to continue a sufferer for the faults of others; and I fear, if I am still to be persecuted, when you know that I have so much deserved a contrary fate, lest my patience should be worn out. I know as well as any one, how far to carry my profound respect where it is due; but I am

likewise not ignorant, that God has not givn me an existence, to be silent when my reputation and honour are at stake. The King is the master of everything else, and it is also from him, before whom I prostrate myself, that I expect the consolation which so faithful, so zealous, and so submissive a subject as I have always been deserves. I protest to you, Madam, that if his Majesty could think for a moment of my having been in the least wrong, in what has occurred, I should be so much grieved at it, that I would renounce everything, and retire to some corner of the world, where I should be out of the reach of man's injustice. You will think me, perhaps, too bold in speaking to you as I do; but I know the extent of that kindness with which you honour me, and that I risk nothing in discovering to you the inmost recesses of my heart, than which you will not find a better, nor one more devoted to you.

P.S. An officer arrived here yesterday evening, despatched by the Duke de Noailles, with letters to the King: he has, also, done me the honour of writing to me, stating their object, which would be of great importance, and which appears to me well founded and concerted; but this peace, which is so much desired where you are upon any terms, will blind you to everything else, whatever advantage might be derived from it. The Queen sends to his Majesty your nephew's letters, in order that he may answer him

as he thinks proper; he is equally beloved and esteemed by all of us here.

I think I have had the honour of mentioning to you, that I am visited by no Frenchman, and that for this reason I have desired M. de Blecourt not to call upon me, in order that I may not be considered as a woman who would impart to him what she knows. I meddle with neither great nor small affairs, having determined to obey the King and Queen, only on this condition, that I should wipe my hands of everything of the kind; and I find my situation much better for it, because I am more at my case.

9th, in the afternoon.

We have just heard from the King, who is in good health. The Arragonese were delighted at his presence, and the city of Sarragossa sent a deputation to him, entreating him to stop and dine in their city to which his Majesty consented, after going to the church of Nuestra Senora del Pilar, which is a great act of devotion in this country.

LETTER CLXX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 26th, 1709.

You have done me the honour of sending me, by Count de Bourg, an account of the complete

defeat of M. d Mercy, and which is asserted to be owing to treachery, the proofs of which have been found amongst his papers, which have been transmitted to the King. Although this success be considerable the troops possess the same valour ly made Europe tremble, my joy is ed by fe ng lest it be unavailing, will continue to be sued for in a pr miliating manner, and upon any te e enemy may be pleased to grant. I they who having no doubt of this truth, expose their lives, and lose them in actions which are not decisive of the fate of mortals. This appears to me, Madam, to be making very little account of good subjects, thus to send them to an useless slaughter. M. de Besons has acted much more properly in retreating before M. de Staremberg, provided, however, he prefers life to the loss of honour: for, Madam, we must not deceive ourselves; our nation is dishonoured in this country, although it may not have deserved it. The Queen heard yesterday that the King had joined the army; that army, Madam, which he maintains at his own expence, and which, perhaps, the King, his grandfather, does not wish to obey his orders—a thing unheard of. We may carry our fears still further. The King of Spain is, however, prepared against the worst that may happen, and his courage and fortitude will never forsake

him. The Queen, for a woman, does not possess less; and if fortune is to overwhelm so good a Prince and Princess, they will have the sad consolation of showing that they deserved a better fate. It is not of much consequence, as it strikes me, Madam, whether the citadel of Tournay holds out a little longer or not, as peace is negociating; which, likewise, induces me to believe that Marshal de Villars will not offer battle, and that the precaution of sending Marshal de Boufflers, to be at hand in case of some misfortune befalling him, might be merely a pretext to employ him elsewhere.

Their Majesties, Madam, confide much in the fidelity of their subjects; and the departure of M. Amelot, when the French troops remain in Spain, does not appear very consistent. The ambassador you know asked for his recall, because he thought they were to be withdrawn.

I do not well understand what you do me the honour of saying, in a passage of your letter, as follows: "I shall make no reply, Madam, to your observations upon our conduct with respect to your's; I should even scarcely wish to explain myself upon it in a conversation." I have turned over in my mind, again and again, whence could arise this reserve, and at length have imagined I had discovered the cause; but I have banished it as a mischievous idea, my respect not permitting

me to believe that it was wished for me to act a bad part, and that I should guess it in order to avoid an explanation with you.

I am much affected by the loss the Duke and Duchess of Alba have sustained in the death of an only beloved son; I honour and love them as much as they merit, and I sincerely wish it was in my power to alleviate their grief, which God only can do. I can easily conceive that a woman who loves her husband as she ought, would contentedly sacrifice her life to preserve his; but I confess to you, with my usual candour, that I would not do it for him that might take another wife in order to have offspring by her; for the idea of being so soon forgotten as to admit another to a place in his heart, would prevent me from giving him that liberty; and I would take good care not to sacrifice myself in order that he might have an heir. It is right to have a regard for his family name to a certain point, however respectable it may be; more appears to me a mere chimera, about which we might be indifferent. Poor Cardinal Portocarrero finished his part yesterday; he conversed with Count de Paluce, his nephew, until midnight; nothing appeared to remain of his malady but an erysipelas in the leg, which was gradually disappearing; two hours after, he had occasion to call one of his attendants, and fell asleep. At six o'clock one of his valets de chambre drew aside his curtain, as it was usual for him to

do, and he found him dead. Although he was above eighty-one, he appeared so robust, that one would have thought he might have survived many years longer; he is much regretted by the poor, to whom he was a benefactor. Their Majesties also regret him, although he rendered them no service. The affairs of the court of Rome with this court will be extremely embarrassing, on account of the Bulls; and it will be difficult to make a good choice of a successor to the Archbishop of Toledo. The King of Spain had troubles enough without this additional one.

I am very sorry that Madame de Caylus is subject to the nephretic colic; I wish her always to enjoy good health, and that she had no cause to be otherwise than content. If my wishes were gratified, Madam, you would be more so than any one upon earth, and I trust that you have no doubt about them.

LETTER CLXXI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, September 16th, 1709.

I HAVE been too much habituated, Madam, to the confidence you have been pleased to allow me to place in you, not to continue availing my-

self of this favour, which has been until now so great a source of consolation in all my troubles, and of which I never had so much need as at present. You have had the goodness to assure me, from time to time, that the King was satisfied with my conduct, and that you had not perceived the least symptom of a change; I have placed an entire reliance upon such a testimony, and continued to act as I began. I had the honour of writing to you, a long time since, foreseeing that the King of Spain would be abandoned, that I thought it necessary to prevent his subjects from harbouring any jealousy of a Frenchwoman, and that they might not believe the confidence of their Majesties was shared between them and me, for which reasons, I thought it right to depart; I have often mentioned this to you, and you have sometimes answered, that I must not think of such a step; at other times, you have asked me, whether I should have the courage to abandon a Princess, to whom you think me so useful; that I was the best judge whether it would be conducive to her service, and that the King left it to me to act as I thought proper; that I served him in serving their Majesties; and you concluded by adding, that I must remain with them until the Spaniards would no longer suffer it. Notwithstanding all this, I have persisted in my intention; I have endeavoured, by the most energetic representations to the King and Queen, to prevent their opposing it, which

they, however, have done, and have got all my friends, and M. Amelot, to speak to me, to induce me to remain. I entreated their Majesties to give me, at least, permission to go to Aranjuez whilst the changes were operating in the government, and new places were given or taken away, in order that it might not be believed I had anything to do with these things. The King and Queen granted me the above favour, and I made preparations to depart for this country-house, seven leagues from Madrid, at which I had declared that I would not be visited by any one. When his Majesty resolved to go into Arragon, he evinced, in his *despacho*, the anxiety and chagrin that he should experience, if I did not continue with the Queen and Prince, and used the most obliging expressions to induce a compliance with his wishes, but without effect. His ministers advised him to send me a peremptory order to stop, which he did. This produced its effect, and I thought myself obliged to obey, more especially in so formidable a conjuncture as the present. Is there anything in my proceedings which may have displeased the King? I have reason to apprehend this misfortune, since it has been intimated to me by a person of consequence, and who is well thought of by his Majesty, that he and his ministers impute to me all that may cause displeasure, and that I shall be very much blamed by every body, if I do not depart, as soon as possible. How can it be, if the King really thinks so with respect

to me, that he does not send me a positive command to retire, I who so well know how to obey his Majesty; I should be much more obliged to him than to learn his sentiments indirectly, and with less certainty. I presume, therefore, through you, very humbly to entreat the King, to send me a written order of what he desires to become of me. I will literally execute it, and it will protect me against reproaches, for abandoning the Queen in her misfortunes, by forgetting all that I owe to her and myself, or of not being considered as the cause, by remaining, of the disagreeable events which might happen. I do not think that my request will appear unreasonable to you; I even think that it would be cruel to refuse me, when I submit so sincerely, and so respectfully, to all that the King, my master, may desire of your very humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CLXXII.

TO THE SAME.

(Extra from Letters, written by Count de Bergheist, to the Princess des Ursins, at different times.)

"Paris, July 13th, 17 .

"It is only the King's own subjects who can maintain him upon the throne, by a particular

peace, and it is now proper for France and Spain to proclaim an entire separation, and even for the latter power to exhibit externally great animosity against the former. In order to obtain this end, his Majesty must abandon himself entirely to the Spaniards, and be solely governed by their counsels, that M. Amelot discontinues to interfere, but that he will have the goodness to give the benefit of his information to those to whom his Majesty shall confide his affairs, in order that his removal may cause as little derangement as possible. I know how usefully he has served the King, and his Catholic Majesty has appeared as well satisfied with him as the King, our master. It is, moreover, proper that his Catholic Majesty should dismiss all the French who are in his service, but it should appear outwardly as if it was the King who recalled them; such is the opinion here. The King has also done me the honour of speaking to me about you, and having represented to him, that as you were without any public mission on his part, but merely in the Queen's service from the beginning, it appeared to me that you ought not to be considered in the same position as the others, but to leave that to the good pleasure of their Majesties, to which he agreed."

"July 25th, 1709.

"It suits his Christian Majesty to effect an entire separation of the two crowns, with an apparent animosity."

"Versailles, August 12th, 1709.

"AFFAIRS are pressing at this moment, and I require assistance; I hope, Madam, that you will not think I have any idea of removing you from their Majesties; I protest to you that it is quite foreign to my intentions: I am upright, and to be believed, and you ought to believe all that I have the honour of saying to you; provided, even, that I had this intention, I would not appear in the business; it would have been easy for me to do it by other means, but I should ever reprobate the very idea of it, and the whole course of my life has been straight-forward. If you think it proper, Madam, to make the sacrifice of some months absence, in case it becomes resolved upon, it would be proper for you to suggest a motive, which might make the public believe that you would not return. Everything will probably be brought to a conclusion soon, and at the latest, next winter; there is nothing to the present moment which presses, and, perhaps, it will not be necessary that you should make this sacrifice: I shall be better informed by the answer. I could wish you, in the mean time, to have it understood, that you are determined to retire from court, from a motive which should appear to you the most plausible to obtain belief, affecting secrecy, and getting some of your furniture packed up, which will cause it to be more talked of. I know the spirit of the nation: it would be adviseable that

the report of it should reach the Hague, which is very well informed of everything passing at Madrid; you must, likewise, advise the King to place his entire confidence in those of his subjects who are the most attached to him, and you must absolutely have nothing to do with affairs, except the King's service requires it. I think you will conceive the object in this, is to obviate the impression which is always inimical to negociation, because it should prove to the enemy an entire independence of, and separation from the interests of France."

"Mons, August 31st, 1709.

"You will understand, from what I have the honour of writing to the King, that he has nothing to hope for, but in the fidelity and fortitude of his subjects; and that the enemy will place no confidence in any overtures which may be made to them, without first showing them an entire separation from France, even with animosity; I beg you to be so good as to devote a serious attention to this, because it is our only dependence, and it cannot be too promptly put into execution. His Majesty, his ministers, and all well disposed persons, have the same view of it that I have: therefore, you will incur the blame of all if you throw any impediment in the way, for you well know that everything is attributed to you. I hope that you will be pleased with my candour.

When an affair of this importance is in agitation, nothing can be concealed, and you are well aware that I have no other interest in it, than that of having the honour of discharging my duty to the King, and deserving more and more your favourable regards, from the great idea I entertain of your merits."

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE SAME, TO THE KING OF SPAIN.

"Versailles, August 12th, 1709.

"It appears to me, Sire, after the account which I have just had the honour of rendering you, of the feelings of your enemies, that your Majesty should adopt, for a primary maxim, the effecting with animosity, an entire separation of your interests from those of France, to employ in the affairs of your government only your own subjects, and to confide wholly in their fidelity and zeal for your Majesty, and to govern your dominions yourself, confiding to, and employing in your affairs those whom your Majesty shall judge the most capable, and whom your Majesty shall think the most attached to you; and to answer more fully the confidence, which you seem to place in my zeal and attachment, and never to have to reproach myself with the least relaxation in that assiduity, which I am the more obliged to exercise to promote the interests of your Majesty, I presume to represent to you, that if Madam des Ursins had a perfect knowledge

of the present situation of things, I have no reason to doubt but she would beg, from her own impressions, permission of your Majesty for a temporary absence from Spain, at least until peace is concluded. I am, Sire, very much devoted to the Princess des Ursins, and feel highly grateful for her kindnesses; I know also, Sire, that her attachment to your Majesty cannot be surpassed; and for this very reason, that she ought to make this sacrifice, and gladly and promptly adopt this measure, if she conceives how necessary it is, and that it might be decisive in the present crisis for the interests of your Majesty, because your enemies will always think that the same spirit of France will govern Spain, so long as she resides at Madrid; and this absence, Sire, will not be for long: affairs will be concluded next winter at the latest; after peace she would return, with the satisfaction of having made so seasonable a sacrifice of her affection. But it is proper, Sire, that this absence should appear to the public as if she was not to return, in order that all the good effects from it may be produced which are contemplated. Such is the opinion, Sire, of the King, and all the ministers, as well as the most distinguished persons at this court who have spoken to me of it, and are the best disposed towards your Majesty."

P. S. Here is enough, I should think Madam, to show you that I am ill-used, and that what

I have had the honour of observing to you in my letter is well founded. I expect your answer, and presume to hope that if the King continues to wish for my departure, he will have the goodness to send me a peremptory command in order that nothing may be imputed to me ultimately for what may happen when I shall be gone; I am too weary of being the martyr of every one, when I have nothing to reproach myself with on the uprightness of my intentions.

LETTER CLXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

September 26th, 1709.

The sanguinary battle which has been fought in Flanders, Madam, affects me, on account of the poor people who were killed or wounded, and the distress occasioned to their families; in other respects, there is more cause for rejoicing than sorrow; the enemy was much stronger than us, and our loss is much less than theirs. They are undeceived in the bad opinion which they had of the French, and they will not think in future of penetrating into France, in their presence, with impunity, as they boasted of doing; it is a miracle, which God has been pleased to vouch-

safe in our favour, and which you did not presume to expect, any more than the victory of Count de Bourg in Germany, and the success of the Duke de Noailles in Catalonia. How will you be able to say, after this, that it would be clearly opposing the divine will not to make peace, and continue a fruitless resistance? It appears to me that you might give a more correct interpretation, which would be to profit from his favours: if God intended our downfall, he would not have done so much for us, and I am persuaded he will punish you if you do not draw near unto him, when he stretches forth his hand. You see that on this occasion I am very far from thinking as you do, and I am not alone; what has occurred in Flanders is considered as beneficial to the cause, and bonfires have been made by order of the court, and all the people shouted *Vivat*. But I drop this strain, nor shall I touch upon other subjects, although matter is not wanting; you must not always receive letters filled with fire and blood from me, for you to reproach me with a mildness which makes me silent, although it heats my bile still more. I know from this moderation that you feel yourself capable of wishing to cut our throats. You will not, however, own it, notwithstanding your candour; you would not presume to do it; you will, however, derive neither honour or advantage from it, and we shall all be unfortunate, without its being the fault of their Catholic Majesties,

who are [illegible]de too little account of. I have only to conclude; these reproaches would lead me further than I could wish: I entreat you, to pardon me then should they displease you; I shall, perhaps, make more another time, and you are quits [illegible] rate, with a woman whose heart is un[illegible]ut who cannot help feeling that she r[illegible] more than herself, and that nothing can p[illegible] her from being affectionately devoted to you

P.S. How I pity t[illegible]ady of Marshal de Noailles and the Duchess de Guiche, on account of the wounds of M. M. de Guiche and De Coëtqueu! I likewise feel for that of M. de Courcillon, on account of its effect upon his lady, Madame de Dangeau and de Pompadour. If I could presume, I would entreat you, with all humility, Madam, to have the goodness to make to them my compliments of condolence; I have had the honour of writing to the two first mentioned ladies.

LETTER CLXXIV

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 6th, 1709.

THE King of Spain has returned, Madam, without being able to expel the enemy from Balaguer,

to which place Marshal de Besons had the complaisance to let them advance, although very superior to them, and without having, as you say, any other orders than those which the King usually gives to his generals, to wit, not to risk his troops unseasonably. His Catholic Majesty had much difficulty in persuading this general to make the movements which he has made, by marching forward, and approaching within two leagues of Count de Staremberg, in order to offer him battle, which he declined, feeling himself too weak not to fear the issue; this movement could not fail being honourable to his Catholic Majesty, yet it has been attempted to undervalue it. Meanwhile, in leaving M. de Besons at the head of his army, to take up such quarters as he pleases, he has added to this confidence the order of the Fleece, which he has conferred upon him; at which I cannot help observing to you, that I was very much surprised. We are not permitted to dive into the secrets of our masters, and Kings do not often think like other men. The Queen will go from hence next Wednesday, to meet his Majesty at Guadalaxara, and will return on Friday the 11th instant; I shall not have the honour of accompanying her, as I remain to take care of the Prince of Asturias. I am always much better in my retirement, and I shall continue it: I think I should do the same were I in France, I am so heartily weary of seeing falsehood, self-interest,

and ingratitude in the generality of people! How can I help, from such trials, being soured, or evincing it to you, whom I know to possess qualities so opposite to these defects; and who would appear to me quite perfect, if you did not ardently desire a peace, for which you will absolutely sacrifice their Catholic Majesties? You do not openly join their enemies to make war against them, in order to avoid a flagrant action, which would eternally tarnish the King's glory, but other means are employed, that are not less hurtful, this is to keep in the King of Spain's pay, thirty-seven battalions, which in completing his ruin, lay waste his provinces, and from which he derives no other advantage than retreating before his enemies, and which would have done still more mischief, if his Catholic Majesty had not prevented it. Can you presume candidly to say, that what I have the honour of observing to you is not true, and do you think I am wrong in reproaching you with such conduct? I do not risk quarrelling with you in speaking to you freely, since you have given me that permission, and I shall say to you, perhaps, as Cardinal Mazarin said: "Let them speak, that they may let us act." It would be better to consent to the Duke de Noailles' execution of his project; you pretend that it cannot be done, because you want all the means; I reply, that it is to the King of Spain he is to apply for the money, which efforts would be made to procure, and that it would

only cost you the regret of seeing your nephew expel the Archduke from Catalonia, after taking Girona, and forming a junction with M. de Besons, who, in this case, should have different orders from court than those which he has had up to this time. You would soon perceive, after this event, that the pretensions of our enemies would be more reasonable, especially after having just experienced that our nation has not less courage than themselves and that it has only yielded to a very superior force. I remember that these poor Frenchmen had lost much of your good opinion, and that you feared lest they could not prevent this formidable enemy from coming as far as Versailles. Thank God! they are not so near it; and if the courtiers would cease their lamentations, it would not be impossible for everything to resume fresh energy, and money to be once more in circulation. I confess that this scarcity is a cruel thing; but recollect when there was none, they spoke in the same manner, and it is more than five years since they said everything was lost, if they did not throw as fast as possible at the enemy's head the whole monarchy of Spain, with a great part of the King's strong places, in order that they might have the goodness not to swallow up the rest.

You see miracles beginning to appear in our favour, and you despair of seeing more: your confidence is too confined: mine extends much farther, since I am convinced that heaven will continue to favour us, provided that, knowing

the favours we have received from God this campaign, we should endeavour to deserve, by neglecting nothing which depends upon us, the still greater efforts of his omnipotence in our favour. After all these reasonings, I fear much lest you will do neither more nor less on account of my arguments. I must then, Madam, patiently endure all the ill that is said of me, and be blamed for the faults of others. This is really quite pleasant, and very right; but it is beyond my comprehension, and I know not why I am always a mark to every one who will commit bad actions, in which I have not the least share. If I were vindictive, I should have the means of avenging myself; I should gain more in this world, but should lose more in the next; and everything considered, I prefer my present line of conduct.

M. Amelot writes to tell me that he has had the honour of an interview with you for an hour and a half, which seems to have delighted him, and at which I am not astonished; he assures me that I cannot place too much dependance upon the honour of your friendship; and I think as he does, which enables me to sustain the afflictions of my life. I was well aware that M. Amelot would represent the Queen to you as perfect as I told you, and which you would not believe: he is a good judge, and as he is a man of great feeling and intelligence, he knows better than another how to estimate the mind and solidity of

her Majesty, with which he appeared to me duly impressed. The King has done very ill in recalling him from the King, his grandson; but perhaps he has been actuated by the motive, that his affairs would not be so well managed as when M. Amelot had to do with them. You see, Madam, that I lose sight of nothing. You would be much disappointed, if, notwithstanding all these measures to ruin Spain, it should be preserved by Philip V. What would I not give that this may be the case!—provided, however, that France would not suffer too much from it; for I do not love it less than you do, although I am so enthusiastic in what concerns their Catholic Majesties.

LETTER CLXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 14th, 1709.

You have received in the same packet two letters, which I had the honour of writing to you, Madam, and I have received the answers to them by the last post, the 29th and 30th ultimo. You scold me in both, without my having deserved it, since I am fully prepared to confound you, which is, by copies of letters from Count de Bergheist, the originals of which I keep, and which will show you whether I was wrong in making my com-

plaints, when I observed to you that you wrote to me in one manner, and this minister in another; and that he assured me that the King wished me to leave this; to which purport he also wrote to the King of Spain, and he has too much good sense, and knows too well the respect which is due to the King's, to advance falsehoods. I confess to you, Madam, that I am sensibly affected at not being sufficiently known for it to be thought necessary to employ such manœuvres to induce me to take the step which it is wished for me to adopt; I thought I had given proofs enough of my obedience, attachment, and zeal, for it to be believed, that I should comply with the least indication from the King, and I learn with great grief, that I cannot flatter myself that his Majesty regards me as a subject honoured with his esteem and affection. This makes me fear that there remains in his mind something of the injurious impressions, which malignity found the means of insinuating into it, and that the four years which I have since had the honour of passing with their Catholic Majesties, in the midst of envy, fatigue, and troubles of every sort, have rather made me lose favour with the King, than procured me fresh merit. You know, however, Madam, whether it was not my intention to return to Rome, believing myself justified, and whether it was not through a perfect submission, that I resolved to return to this court, where everything was in such great disorder, that M. Amelot and myself If

were told we should soon return to Paris, with the King and Queen of Spain. We have, however, lived here during this period, and their Majesties would have been firmly established upon their throne, had it been desired, as it was easy for the French troops to expel the Archduke from Catalonia; this was no fault of ours; we have written often enough our thoughts upon this subject, and so has the Duke de Noailles.

The last passage of your letter, next claims my notice, in which you do me the honour of telling me, that it will, perhaps, be necessary for me to tear out my heart, because you thus qualify my separation from the Queen. You are not deceived; my affection for this Princess is so great, that it will be a dagger's blow that I shall give myself; but I shall not fail to do it courageously, when I shall believe it to be for the good of her service, and the satisfaction of the King, our master. It would be now of no use to reply to all the passages in which you urge upon me the necessity of making peace, as it would only serve to sour us against each other, and answer no end; you will have it upon any terms, and you think to save the honour of the French name by so acting, imputing it to the law of necessity, and saying that God evidently commands it. Your interpretations and mine are very different; but I wish that yours may be the best, and that your situation may correspond with them on the conclusion of the war; for, I am as desirous as you can

be for the p servation of France, whose present and future mi fortunes I deplore; as to the rest, my advisers are not so bad, when they predicted to me, it is now long ago, strange catastrophes, which are at hand, and they have been but too good judges.

It appears to have a desire to know what wer hen I thought of retiring from Spa t impart them to you, because the commanded me to remain here whilst Arragon; it would then have been premature, but now it appears to be otherwise, and your asking me the question confirms me in it: my plans are then as follows: the situation in which I shall leave their Majesties, if I go, hardly permits me to hope that they can maintain themselves against so many enemies, when the King is an accession to their number. Do not, I beg of you, blame me for explaining myself so explicitly to you, when I saw, by a letter from the King to his grandson, that he would be obliged to join his enemies, in order to procure peace, in case his Catholic Majesty should not accede to his wishes. It is these preliminaries which have terrified even those who imposed them, but which will, nevertheless, be acceded to. On that event taking place, I will remove to as short a distance as possible from the Queen, to be the nearer at hand to render her that sad assistance,

the Pyrenees, I shall stop in some little town the nearest to them, where I may often receive accounts of a favourable or unfavourable nature to their Majesties. I shall, perhaps, fix upon Pau, which although formerly the place where Henry IV. held his court, is disagreeable enough, and situated in the mountains, where there is a great deal of frost during the winter. This will be the least of my evils. I shall endure every privation; houses that are in the least cleanly are scarce, and there is no furniture to be hired: I have no money to purchase any, and I have no means of remedying it but by my camp bed, and of actually getting a tapestry made of mats to cover the walls of my chambers to make it warmer. This is a fine residence, Madam, for a woman whom you have often told was destined to play a great part. I have had an inclination to make you and Mademoiselle d'Aumale a present of such tapestry, to reward you both for the letters you dictate to her, and which she takes the trouble of writing; a reward more proportioned to the simplicity of Saint Cyr, than to the value of what you do me the honour of communicating, for I respect even your abuse of me. Such are the plans which have excited your curiosity; but I have others, for the remainder of my days, which, as they only concern myself, you shall not of course know. I beseech you to tell me, whether my plans meet the approbation of his Majesty. The death of Marshal de Villars would

be a serious loss, as men like him are everywhere rare. From what you relate of the generous feelings which the officers and soldiers manifest, he is not the only one who preserves his courage, and you see that great injustice was done him when it was thought otherwise. I could wish M. de Courcillon was cured of his severe wound, and I can easily conceive how affectionately you participate in the trouble occasioned by it to so estimable and beloved a friend as Madame d'Angeau.

Cardinal de Portocarero was very well enabled to serve the King, his master, had he been so inclined; he had a great deal of corn, and plenty of money, a part of which he might have appropriated to the succour of the troops, but he did not put it to so good a use. M. Amelot will tell you of his Eminence what you would not have believed.

How pleased am I at the agreeable figure which my friend makes, and that the King has given a post in the gendarmerie to her son, because he distinguished himself in the battle, although scarcely out of boyhood! From the disposition that I know her to possess, nothing could please her more. It is a long time since I had the honour of telling you, that you could not bring her too near you and the Duchess of Burgundy.

Although I no longer meddle with any public business, it appears to me that you might revoke the order which you gave to hear it mentioned, and

that you would do better not to lose sight of it, since you are not, you say, indifferent to what concerns their Catholic Majesties. I pity you greatly at having lost such a pious bishop, who possessed all your confidence for so many years: it is a great consolation to have a steady friend, from whom one need conceal nothing.

The King of Spain returned on Thursday, the 10th instant, in good health, and found the Queen and Prince also well. Madrid has had great public rejoicings for his return, and the people went in crowds to give him a thousand benedictions.

Their Majesties have an indescribable affection for each other; I have obeyed them in remaining until the end of this journey. I am now ready to obey the King in whatever he shall be pleased to command me, and I will do my best to discharge my duty everywhere. Such is, Madam, the state of my mind and heart, of which you will make what use you please, as I throw myself entirely into your hands.

LETTER CLXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 21st, 1709.

I HAD the honour of writing to you such a long letter the last time, Madam, that this ought to

be short in order to save you the trouble of reading what must be tiresome in itself, but which, nevertheless, I cannot help imparting to you.

Your goodness would not let you announce an unpleasant piece of news to me, but having learnt it from another [illegible] cannot help expressing my mortification [illegible] ing concurs on this occasion to make [illegible] that I am neither happy, nor regard [illegible] King as a person who deserves the continuance [illegible] his favours; for I should think it must be my name alone which has rendered this affair unfortunate, and caused a refusal to M. Amelot which dishonours him, when there is no recompense that he does not deserve, compared to what is done for others, for the services he has rendered the two crowns during his embassy of four years and a half. The idea afflicts me beyond expression, being much more affected at the injury I have done him, than the shame I incur from it in this court, where consequences are deduced from everything. The King of Spain, persuaded that he ought, as well for his own interest as through a well deserved gratitude, to reward the services, not of the ambassador of the King, his grandfather, but of a minister whose labours had been so useful to himself, declared his intentions in council, which gave them publicity, for neither M. Amelot nor I had said a word of it: all the counsellors extolled his Majesty Charles II. who, to recompense the

services of Count de Mansfelt, when he returned from his embassy, created him a grandee of Spain, and made a principality of the estate of Fondi, in the kingdom of Naples, with a revenue of more than fourteen thousand crowns per annum, of which he made him a present. M. Amelot had an aunt, whose first husband was the Prince de Soubise; one might have habituated oneself, I should think, to seeing amongst so many others, his daughter honoured with a coronet. Count de Chalais is, on his side, of a family which never made an ill assorted marriage in the eldest branch, of which he is the only remaining member, and of such antiquity, that the first families of France might court the honour of his alliance; he has served fourteen years at sea, and he left this service only because the physicians thought it would be his death, on account of a complaint in the chest. He had an elder brother, whom the Duke de Montlausier, his great uncle, wished to have the care of, and whom he entered as a page to Monseigneur; he died a martyr to the wounds he received in the battle of Spires, after being nine years a simple captain of dragoons. Count de Tayllerand, their cousin, died some years ago of a malady which he caught in Piedmont, being then colonel of a regiment of marines; and the Count de Beauville, brother to the latter, was killed at Chiari, being a captain in the same regiment; thus you see, Madam, that they have neglected

no opportunity of showing their zeal, and deserving the King's gracious favours. I say nothing of my own concerns, for the painful existence I have here, in ruin[illegible]ry respect, apparently does not dese[illegible]tion to be paid to them. Do not blame [illegible]it you, for unbosoming myself to you [illegible]h candour and confidence, since y[illegible]nly person with whom I can do it, and [illegible]ind of solace which I cannot refuse my[illegible]m troubled about your health, since you did me the honour of telling me, that you were labouring under indispositions which often compelled you to keep your bed; it is difficult to be well when exposed to perpetual agitations. I thank God that the wound of Marshal de Villars appears less dangerous than it was though at first, and I am very glad to hear that M. de Courcillon begins to give flattering hopes of him; figure to myself all the joy his family and you will have on seeing him again. It would be a pity that so amiable a woman as his wife should have become a widow. Everybody is agreed, as it should seem that the enemy had thirty thousand men killed and wounded; it was desirable, after their army had been again weakened before Mons, that our should have compelled it to raise the siege: this would be the way to abate their arrogance, and force them to a reasonable peace: we ought never

LETTER CLXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 4th, 1709.

I MUST, Madam, really think that you would be very glad to be disappointed, in seeing the King of Spain preserve his crown, since you assure me that it would give you pleasure, for I have not yet caught you in the fact of saying an untruth. I feel, however, sometimes, that you are obliged not to tell what you think, and you pass over certain things in silence very smoothly, when you wish me not to know that I am in the right. I cling to my idea, that it is not impossible but their Catholic Majesties will maintain themselves, notwithstanding all you do to ruin them; provided, nevertheless, that their subjects do not belie the zeal which they manifest, (of which we shall have a better idea before some months are elapsed) and that one can reckon upon the number of troops which are levying, and the means of supporting them.

It is true, Madam, that I exult at the courage which the French have shown; if they are encamped so near Mons, why do they not succour it? Marshal de Berwick is fortunate; how glorious

it would be for him to render so great a service to the state! Unfortunately you seem far from entertaining such hopes. Does he not perceive, that you have already infused into M. Amelot a part of your melanch[illegible] he speaks no longer to me, but of the pi[illegible]uation of France, the scarcity of corn and mo[illegible], which no longer circulates, and the necessity of making peace. I agree with you and him, that it is desirable, but that it would be much better not to do it, but to support the war, and it cannot be denied but that there is plenty of money. You say nothing to me of the memorial, which my friend has shown you; he wrote to tell me that it was very much approved.

The Duke de Noailles forms such feasible projects, that I cannot conceive why he is not seconded, as you would soon experience very considerable advantages from them; but it is knocking one's head against the wall to attempt to convince you.

The Marshal de Boufflers is great in all he does: such men do honour to the age. The King has ample reason to be satisfied with Marshal Berwick's campaign in Dauphiny.

May I observe without offending you, that the ideas of people, in your country, are not always correct, since you do me the honour of writing to me, that nobody doubts but that the Spaniards will fix upon the Archduke, when they see the

King, their master, abandoned by his Christian Majesty: they are piqued at it. This aggravates the hatred which they naturally entertain against our nation; but it appears to me, that such ideas induce them to think, that it is still more their bounden duty to be faithful to their true master. Thus, Madam, the courtiers of Versailles reckon without their host. I confess that my situation is neither tranquil nor happy. Nevertheless, you are the cause of the greatest part of my chagrin, and you will not alleviate it. What can you say which pleases me more, than the assurances you give me of your friendship? You might extend its effects still farther, which would make me better satisfied with you than I am, although I should not be more affectionately attached to you.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 17th, 1709.

I HAVE received no letters from you, Madam, so sad as that which you did me the honour of writing from Marly on the 4th instant. There is a portion of melancholy and a disgust at everything, which afflicts me so much, that I cannot answer

you, lest I aggravate still more the gloominess of your thoughts. It appears to me, however, that your good sense should seek a source of consolation in yourself, where you would find it sooner than in men; and that you should reflect more especially, that all this world is merely a theatre, filled with bad actors, who scarcely deserve your attention; and that there is another more serious object, which should constitute our felicity. I should pity you more, and myself also, if we had not this prospect; for there is neither rhyme nor reason in what is occurring around us, and it seems as if good sense, wisdom, and honour were banished from the earth. What you say about manœuvres to embroil the generals this winter is an evident proof of it. I know not why those persons are not punished, who might be convicted, if they had put into execution so pernicious an intention: they are the pestilence of courts, who ought to be banished from all intercourse with mankind, and it would be a greater punishment to endure than to chastise them, seeing the mischief they are capable of doing. I only discover one reason which can make you fear, lest I should again find myself in that dark room, in which I had the honour of conversing with you, and which you wished to be upon the footing of confidence; the fever I had at that time must have been much more violent than it was, solely to occupy my attention, when I enjoyed so delicious a conversation as yours, which made me

perceive, that whatever the mind relishes considerably assuages the pains of the body. I presume to hope, that if ever I should meet you again, in the same place, I shall experience similar kindnesses from you, and that you will unbosom yourself to a friend, who would not make a bad use of it, but who would be more affected than any one else. It is very difficult to foresee what may happen, and our judgment is so uncertain, that no solid reliance can be placed upon it; you can, only, Madam, rely upon my devotedness and boundless gratitude to you.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM M. DE PONTCHARTRAIN, TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS.

"Versailles, October 12th, 1709.

"I FLATTER myself, Madam, that you will not disapprove of my having the honour to confess to you, that I cannot help feeling real chagrin on account of the zeal which you have for a long time known to actuate me, in behalf of their Catholic Majesties, that the Spanish ministers should have induced the Queen to demand the recall of M. d'Aubenton, whose presence would certainly have been useful to her, especially in the present conjuncture. I ought also to inform you, that when I imparted it to the King, on the authority of a letter I had received from M. de Blécourt, his Majesty appeared very much surprised, and at

the same time angry, at a recall so injurious to the union of the two nations, and that M. d'Aubenton, who as a Frenchman, ought to have had every facility of remaining in Spain, being besides employed there for his service, and by his orders, should be obliged to return to France on such slight suspicions. As you have honoured him for a long time with your approbation and kindnesses, and as you have been pleased to observe to me, that nothing could be added to his merit, probity, wisdom, and tried zeal in the service of their Catholic Majesties, I am persuaded that you would not see him depart without some repugnance, and that you would wish with me, that his departure may not become in the sequel as prejudicial to their interests, as it is now thought advantageous."

LETTER CLXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 24th, 1709.

I THOUGHT, Madam that honoured as I am by your friendship, it was permitted me to reason with you, in every respect, and that even the irony, which you would find in my letters, could not offend you, as coming from a person whose devotedness you cannot doubt, and who writes to you at one

time seriously, at another time playfully, and always confidentially. You give me reason to think, by your last letter of the 10th instant, that I have gone beyond the prescribed bounds; I shall take care for the future, and merely entreat you to forget the past, if it has displeased you; I should prefer carrying my complaisance for you to insipidity, rather than that you should accuse me any more of indulging too much my free mode of speaking: I will endeavour to avoid being insipid, lest it should make you sick at heart, for it appears to me that this would not be to your taste, and that you prefer a small spice of salt. I am very sorry that you take no part in public affairs, but that of afflicting yourself at them; we should not have, perhaps, so much reason for being so, if you interfered more with them than you do.

"When a French Prince was placed upon the "throne of Spain, it should have been foreseen, as it "now happens, that the enemy would not let him "remain in tranquil possession of it."

Permit me to have the honour of observing to you, that then was the time to make reflections, and that now, every effort should be made to maintain him upon it. I know that, for a long time, this idea has appeared as chimerical in France as you say it is; but I also know, that were it not for our misfortunes, the King of Spain, as well as the King, his grandfather, would be tranquil in their dominions. No one has so much desired, nor

does desire more than I do, a perfect union between their Christian and Catholic Majesties. I ought not, thank God, on that score, to have incurred the acrimony which you fear, since there has not been the least deviation from my duty, and I hope, Madam, that their Catholic Majesties will escape reproach in this respect.

I know but too well the state of France, which appears frightful to me; you have often represented it to me, and that is sufficient; I have no occasion for the confirming testimony of Marshal de Villeroi and M. Amelot, who have often written to me, upon the same subject, to believe what you say.

I would have had some difficulty in formerly thinking that I should be interested in the preservation of the Archduke, but what would probably happen after his death, makes me wish him to live.

You have indeed done wonders, Madam, to induce the Duchess of Burgundy to dress and make herself fine to receive the Elector! She must have been much obliged to you, since she appeared in the eyes of this Prince with her usual magnificence, accompanied by all her charms. I am not surprised that he found her out in the saloon at Marly amongst all the best looking women: she surpasses them, and this great Princess will always be known for what she is. The description you give of her dress, and its beautiful colours, cheers my imagination, and I return you

a thousand humble thanks for it. The Elector will, doubtless, have departed very well satisfied with the civilities of the King and his court, but I do not know whether he will not regret having made so short a stay: he will find a great difference between it and that of Namur. All the news that you have the goodness to send me affords me great pleasure; and I beg of you not to relax in your communications. The accident which happened to Mademoiselle de Navaille (for I think that was her name formerly) was very unseasonable on the eve of her taking the veil. I know the vivacity of the Duchess d'Elbœf, and her great anxiety to see her daughter in a surer way of working out her salvation than that of marriage, and the hope of becoming mother to a saint would be a great satisfaction to her: she will have an uneasy time of it, if I do not deceive myself, until she sees her in the right path.

I am very glad that M. and Madame d'Angeau have brought back M. de Courcillon in so good a state of health, after so severe a wound.

The Princess will be much afflicted, so good a mother as she is, at the Duke and the Princesses going to law together.

I sincerely participate in your joy, on again seeing your illustrious friends, Marshals de Boufflers and de Villars, who are two very estimable characters. Do you really believe me become so indifferent to you, as to be no longer interested

about your health, and is that the reason for your not mentioning it? I am a better judge of your feelings: you would not inform me that you had the quartan fever, for fear of making me uneasy, and you are right in [illegible] t I am deeply affected at whatever con[illegible] r can you conceive the whole extent of [illegible]. It is, between ourselves, not so gre[illegible] nisters; but how could that be otherwise [illegible] ey have wished for so many years to ruin [illegible] and Queen of Spain. The Prince of Astu[illegible] ust cut a double tooth, almost without pain. This Prince, Madam, who would be thought very fortunate, where you are, if there could be preserved for him a small portion of territory, over which he might one day reign, has so fine a physiognomy, and is so perfect in every respect, that I cannot but believe God has a better fortune for him in store.

I have now only to reply to that passage of your letter relative to the memorial, which Marshal de Villeroi has communicated to you, and about which I have my doubts whether it has been well understood, since it is rejected for the very reason which should, above all others, have insured its adoption. It is said, that its author is not yet aware of the extremity to which France is reduced; and I can assure you that he drew it up in the expectation of the worst that might happen, if efforts are not quickly made to restore public credit,

If they are determined in France to reject all good counsel, you are right in wishing for peace; but I fear that we shall not have it so long as our discouragement gives our enemies greater facilities for destroying us. Do not think I am ignorant of the dangerous state of the kingdom: my opinion differs from yours only in as much as I am persuaded there are many ways of remedying the evil, and that we lose ourselves through our own errors.

I am very sorry you have not read this memorial, as it contained nothing obscure, nor beyond the reach of our sex.

LETTER CLXXX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 2nd, 1709.

I AM delighted, Madam, that Marshal de Boufflers has returned so well satisfied with the French as you tell me. You know what I had the honour of observing to you respecting the good opinion I had of the troops when well commanded, and because we have heard from so many quarters that the soldiers and inferior officers were in despair at not being led into the field of battle, and at seeing so many errors committed This ought to convince you, that instead

of forgetting my nation, I feel very sensibly when any attempt is made to degrade it; I love it, as a good mother does her daughter, who does not flatter her faults, and who is pleased with her good qualities: I think this is acting properly, and that people should not blame or praise according to their feelings of hatred or affection.

I must be very complaisant to agree with you, that if you had had money, the project of the Duke de Noailles would not have failed. If I were to indulge my inclination, I should think that as it is the intention of the King, to abandon Spain, he would not wish the Archduke to be tormented on the side of Roussillon, as it might be an obstacle in the way of peace; but I must be wrong, since you think differently. It would be a very happy circumstance should Marshal de Villars get so well cured of his wound, as to be able to serve in the approaching campaign, if it should be rendered necessary, since he has shown the enemy what he can do.

Madame d'Angeau has great cause for affliction, at the heavy misfortune of her son; however I cannot conceive, as she does, that death would be less frightful than his condition. That of being blind at seventeen years of age, which is the case with the Duke de Noirmoutier, is still much worse, having enjoyed the light of heaven only just long enough to make him regret the privation of it; he has been wanting for several years almost bare necessaries, without the least hope of better

fortune; nevertheless, neither he nor his relatives, have thought death was less frightful than his situation. The Marquis de Courcillon possesses, moreover, the advantage of having acquired reputation, which is a great deal for him and those who love him.

The Queen's tumours continue to decrease, and we have every reason to hope for a cure.

Death has, indeed, seized upon the family of Tremoille; I have my fears when a young man, naturally delicate, has had a fever for three months.

The Duchess d'Aumont is much to be pitied at the prospect, as it is said, of losing an eye; and should this last misfortune befall her, she will require all her devotion to sustain it.

We have had most charming weather for a month, and I could wish that you had the same: the King would have pleasanter walks, and you would be less incommoded by the winter.

You see that I do not wish you so much ill as you might think. I would not wish, Madam, to be lower in your estimation than you are in mine, but I know not whether I can presume to flatter myself so far.

CLXXXI.

SAME.

Madrid, December 16th, 1709.

In truth, ve been very much mo
tified, that you s... ve conceived there w
irony in my thanks for the tranquil state of min
you have procured me, by reconciling the lette
of M. de Bergheist with the King's intention
it would have been very vulgar, and your kind
nesses, must, indeed, have spoiled me, thus to b
wanting in my respect towards you. I hav
sincerely told you my embarrassment, and yo
have taken the trouble to give me your opinion, i
order to remove my uneasinesss, for which
there any thing more natural than to testify m
gratitude? I entreat you no longer to entertai
so bad an opinion of me, since I am certainly ve
incapable of deserving it on so disagreeable
subject.

Although I am fully resolved to follow yo
advice, I cannot but be uneasy at what M. Ber
heist continues to write to me. I could wish to avo

you pain; but as you are the only person I can consult, and I should wish always to act for the best, permit me at least to impart to you what he says. He observes to me plainly, that I am not in the secret, although he has done his best to let me into it; that all that he has written to me was consonant to the King's intentions, and even to his advice; that I must expect nothing peremptory from the French court, and that I should solely consult the interests of their Catholic Majesties; the complete separation of the two nations has been very much approved at Versailles, because their union is the only obstacle to peace with Spain; that this principle must be strictly acted upon, without any variation; that he has already mentioned the departure of M. Amelot, and all the French, but it was immediately remarked to him that I remained; that I had an absolute power over the minds of their Catholic Majesties; and that being entirely devoted to France, the King would order the, King, his grandson, to act as he thought proper, by merely writing me a letter upon the subject: all this you see is clear enough, and although I am sure to do nothing against the King's wishes in remaining here, I have not the less to fear being reproached in certain cases for not having adopted a step more suitable to the service of their Majesties. I confess to you that there is scarcely a moment in the day but

my mind labours under these strong impressions.

Do not regret not having shown my letter. I only hazarded it to convince you, that in advocating war, I am still a better Frenchwoman than any other; but since it has not produced that effect, it is now of no consequence.

It is so much the better, if they do not like women to speak of affairs in France, as in that case we shall have many things to reproach the men with, since we shall have nothing to do with them. The mischief is, that certain women possess more honour than they do, and their errors render them the martyrs of this world. I find, however, that the mind of the court is much altered since I left France, for the King did not appear to me to have this opinion, when I had the honour of conversing with him; might not this be the cause of all our misfortunes? Be pleased to pardon me this mischievous joke.

You would be much astonished if I told you, that it is solely the men's fault that the finest bread has sold at more than four sous a pound at Paris, and more than two sous and a half throughout the rest of the kingdom.

My adviser proves it to me, in a manner which admits of no reply: it is at least in his favour, that those who have money to pay well for corn have been able to procure it, and that the price of it

now falls, although it should rise, if it be true that there is not enough in the kingdom to last until the next harvest.

I know, from my own experience, (for nobody is worse off than I am) that France will be unfortunate as long as the debts and beneficences of the King are not discharged: it is for this reason also that I am very sorry more attention was not paid to the memorial which has been presented to you. It requires no alteration in the finances, and the success of the project does not depend upon finding five hundred men rich enough to procure the King the money which he wants. It is true that the author wishes that ninety families may make the same offer, as he proposes for his; but he suggests also another course, because he distrusts the hearts of men, much more than their purses. Nothing is truer than that it is always much wiser to leave those to decide upon things, whom their situation renders the arbiters of our destinies, as whatever may happen, one has the consolation at least of dying according to precedent.

The Prince of Asturias has cut another double tooth, and he has now no more than two to cut, which we have reason to hope will come with the same ease: he begins to prattle French and Spanish very prettily, and I am deceived if he does not one day possess a great mind; all the

Spaniards love him affectionately. The Queen has had a severe cold, accompanied with a high fever, which contined only two days, and I have also had my share. The air is so subtle at Madrid, and the wind so piercing, that one often suffers this indisposition. Comedies are in rehearsal against the King of Spain's birth-day, a species of amusement held in high estimation. The Duke d'Ossuna has had a theatre built at his house, and another at a singer's, whom he honours, it is said, with his favours: an opera will be acted there, the music of which is Italian, and of the best. The orchestra will be good, but the singers wretched: almost all these unfortunate women, who lead a scandalous life, are in so bad a state of health, that they absolutely lose their voices. The Duchess d'Ossuna was very desirous for me to visit her theatre, that I might point out any defects in it. Their Majesties did not think it proper for me to leave the palace for so frivolous an object, the camarera-mayor not being accustomed to go any where without the Queen, unless it be on account of her service. It is said that this theatre, and the saloon, are very magnificent, and shows nothing of the misery which the war causes.

I have heard with much pain, that the Duke d'Harcourt has had a very serious accident, and I participate in your well-grounded uneasiness: we have all sorts in this life, but those which we feel the most, it appears to me, arise from the fear of

losing the persons we love. I entreat you, therefore, Madam, to take care of yourself, as much as possible, in your present state.

LETTER CLXXXII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 19th, 1709.

I HAVE the honour of writing to you to-day, Madam, merely to tell you, that I shall not answer your letter of the 25th ultimo. It is not because it did not deserve considerable discussion, but I have some reasons which oblige me to postpone it to another opportunity; I shall, therefore, content myself with entreating you to continue to me your good opinion, and to believe that there is nobody more affectionately devoted to you than I am.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 23d, 1709.

THERE are but few passages in the letter which you did me the honour of writing to me f

Saint Cyr, dated the 8th instant, but what I can answer by reasons which appear to me sufficiently strong; for I cannot agree, without betraying my thoughts, to a part of what you do me the honour of observing upon the impossibility of adopting new measures, and abandoning those which conduct us so near the precipice that might be avoided. But I feel not at all disposed to dispute the point with you to-day, and I prefer a silent victory over myself, rather than hazard, perhaps, an unseasonable opposition; for there are certain times and conjunctures in life which require prudence, and we should be more happy if we could always exercise it. I could sincerely wish that there was as much ground to hope for the speedy re-establishment of the healths of Messieurs Boufflers and d'Harcourt, as there is for that of Marshal de Villars, as it would be greatly to the advantage of the King's service, and a consolation to their friends. I honour them both very much, and am under great obligations to M. d'Harcourt. He wrote me a very kind letter, a little before his Majesty commanded me to leave Madrid, when no one else dared do so, and when the greatest part of those upon whom I might naturally have placed a dependence, mentioned my name only to load me with opprobrium, thinking by that means that they followed the fashion of the court. I pride myself upon not being ungrateful, but I should be

of goodness and confidence with which the Duke de Noailles has always been pleased to honour me; I, therefore, sincerely esteem him; he possesses a noble and virtuous heart, with every other amiable quality. You cannot, therefore, too highly esteem him, nor can you conceive what pleasure you have afforded me in speaking of him, and calling him your Duke de Noailles: I know not of any rank above his merits. M. Amelot and I have said so a hundred times; and one of the motives, which induced us to desire that the King would enable him to act on the side of Roussillon, was, that we did not doubt but he would have done wonders, which would have obliged his Majesty to recompense him by a distinction that he has already deserved; permit me to add, better than some others who enjoy it.

Let me reproach you, Madam, with being so indifferent a relative, as you do me, perhaps, with being too good a one: but it is very probable that we shall both remain as we are. I figure to myself that the important airs which the Duke de Guiche gives himself, make him resemble a hero of romance: his heroine richly deserves to possess him alone, as she has laboured hard enough to secure him. I am very sorry that the Duchess of Mantua's rank creates her enemies, and gives pain to her mother; it appears to me that people ought to be disposed to live upon good terms wi'

a sovereign, were it only because her late hus
band lost all his states on account of his attach
ment to our two Kings. It is showing a ver
bad example to the living, to hold in so little con
sideration a [illegible] besides, is respectabl
in herself, and [illegible] fficiently amiable to ex
cite envy. Yo [illegible] ould not be so change
able as it is, if [illegible] es were confined to Ver
sailles, Saint Cyr [illegible] arly. Repose certainl
contributes to he [illegible] ch I experience mysel
being much better since I only leave my close
to visit the apartments of the Queen and Princ
which are all nearly of the same temperatur
When their Majesties leave the palace, it is to g
to Atocha; and I have the honour of accompany
ing them in my coach, as *camarera-mayor*, whic
has glasses to it, and in which I am alone, accord
ing to etiquette: it protects me from the wind
and my breast does not suffer, because I have n
occasion to talk. Sometimes, when it is fine, w
take a walk in the gardens of the Retiro, an
at others in those of the palace. Since I a
no longer exposed to the mischievous prating
the courtiers, who visited the *Quarto Chico*, whic
was very cold at this season, or very warm i
summer, I scarcely ever suffer any thing from m
painful rheumatics; all your draught winds wi
give you terrible ones, if you do not take car
and I know not why you do not resolve, once f

that you are indifferent about life; but perhaps you fear death a little, and it is as well to reconcile ourselves to it by degrees, by extending our career as far as we can. I am incapable of alteration, Madam, as far as you are concerned; continue, then, the honour of your good opinion, and I entreat you to let me hear from you as often as possible.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

(Without date.)

ENCLOSED are copies of letters, Madam, which I cannot dispense with communicating to you, my embarrassments daily increasing; or the better to express myself, the time is come, it appears to me, when I have absolute need of the King's commands, since the Count de Bergheist believes and writes that the allies, considering me as a person entirely devoted to France, will not come to the resolution of negociating separately with Spain, so long as I continue at this court. He even wants me, as you will see, to remove to a distance from the frontier, for it to be imagined that I shall not return here after the peace, and, according to him, I cannot too soon make this sacrifice; which to me, personally, would cost nothing, for I

would lay down my life to promote a peace on the conditions which he expects; but their Catholic Majesties, finding no solidity in his ideas, show great repugnance in granting me permission to retire. The King himself has even written a letter, which does me too much honour, since his Majesty therein represents me as a servant, absolutely necessary to the Queen, and the Prince, his son, and whose loss cannot be compensated by such uncertain hopes. Thus situated, I very humbly entreat the King to command me how to act. If his Majesty thinks it proper for me to leave Spain, I shall employ the confidence with which their Catholic Majesties honour me, to impress upon them its necessity; but in this case I very humbly entreat the King, not to let my recall appear to the world as a second disgrace. I assure you I cannot describe my feelings: day and night I am continually thinking of what I owe to their Catholic Majesties, and the letters of M. de Bergheist; my heart and my reason are uniformly agreed as to both, but that is precisely what embarrasses me, because I know not which is the best course to adopt, seeing that it does not depend upon me to determine upon the views of Count de Bergheist. You do me the honour of writing to say, that you know he asserts, I do great injury to their Catholic Majesties; but you are persuaded that I would soon leave them, if I thought as he does, and that I am the proper

person to be referred to, seeing affairs so near at hand. I certainly deserve your entertaining this good opinion of my zeal; but the question is not what is occurring here; the Spaniards have sufficiently shown that I am not disagreeable to them, by advising the King to retain me, when I asked to retire with M. Amelot. It is the allies who think me too good a Frenchwoman, and this is all the mischief that M. de Bergheist pretends I do to the King and Queen; as I have nothing to say on that head, it is to the King alone, it appears to me, that I should take the liberty of addressing myself to learn what I am to do. It remains for me to mention two other points, on which I ask your advice and kind offices: the first respects the place I should go to on leaving this, and the second, the deranged state of my affairs. Before M. de Bergheist intimated that it was highly necessary for me not to stop at the frontiers, I thought of residing at Pau or Toulouse during the time that it shall please God still to afflict us with so cruel a war, owing to the impossibility of being able to form a new establishment at Paris. My circumstances are completely deranged by this cruel necessity of going direct to Rome: it is true, I should economise as much as possible on my journey. But how am I to get there? And what repugnance must I not feel in going to a place where the Germans have now the sway, and where my brother, who, is perhaps, still

more unfortunate than myself, has the use of my house and furniture, which it will be necessary for me to take from him; and also if I went to Paris, I have scarcely any pr perty but from the King's beneficence? On the other hand, as nobody is paid, how shall I do to subsist, at a time when the greatest necessaries of life are at an excessive price there? I beg you, Madam, to tell me, what you think of all this. The interference which I request of you, on my account, is with M. Demaretz. For three years I have only received five thousand livres, of sixty thousand which are due to me for the above period on account of my pension; I am much in debt, and I have not a farthing for my journey. I entreat you to desire him to extricate me from this state of embarrassment. It is not without the greatest disinclination that I speak to you of money, when I see that the French ministers know not how to find any to save the state, but in my present predicament it is the only resource I have. Indeed, I should think it as bad as taking it from the altar, if I accepted any from the King of Spain. There are three years and a half of pension due to me, which his Catholic Majesty had the goodness to allow me when I was in France, and the whole amount of which I owe, yet I have not the courage to solicit the payment of it. M. Amelot, some months before his departure, aware of the deranged state of my affairs, and seeing no other way of assisting me, ordered M.

de Pontchartrain to pay me out of the produce of the *indult* accruing to the King of Spain, from the last vessels that arrived from the Indies, about two years arrears of what were due to me. But this order was rendered unavailing by the chicanery of the latter, who observed at first that all this produce had been carried to the mint, and that he did not know when and how M. Demaretz could pay it; as if what belongs to the King of Spain should be brought into question, upon such an occasion. Afterwards he asserted that all expences paid, he had nothing remaining in his hands, and he now says that M. Amelot had shown him, by his own accounts, that he has wherewith to pay me, and many other sums, which Spain has given and charged to his responsibility; and he adds, that the expences of this armament amount to much more than his estimate. Such proceedings show that they live in France from hand to mouth, and think not of the morrow, for they sour the Spaniards against us more than I can describe; so that for a mere trifle we lose all credit with them.

I apply only to you, Madam, because I depend solely on your kindness, it is from you alone that I expect all the consolation of which I shall have need in the sequel and of whom I shall request it, whatever course I pursue, should the King approve of my quitting Spain. My destiny is very singular: I was called from Spain five years ago, as a bad

French subject; now the allies require me to be sent away, as a woman entirely devoted to France, and who, on the least intimation from the King, could, as they say, induce their Catholic Majesties to do whatever is desired. I do not know what my old enemies can say on this occasion: they will not, however, be silent, and I am so sure of it that I fear nothing so much as exposing myself to their insidious manœuvres in presenting myself at court. How necessary your counsels would be to me there! and how fortunate it is for me, Madam, to know that I can so firmly depend upon the honour of your friendship.

COPY OF A LETTER WRITTEN TO HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY BY COUNT DE BERGHEIST, DATED DECEMBER 16TH, 1709.

SIRE,

As I have received a letter from Holland, from the pensionary of the town of Gouda, the intimate friend and confident of the pensionary Heazius, and who was the first to correspond with me on the subject of peace, in 1705, by the command of the States General, in which he informs me that nothing can be thought of better than the separation and independence of France, in order to bring about peace with Spain; but that there would always be a great obstacle to it, and that it would be difficult to persuade the English that this inde-

pendence was real and sincere or likely to be lasting, so long as the Princess des Ursins remained at your Majesty's court; and that they are apprehensive that the union will be resumed, through her instrumentality, as soon as peace is made; that this union had been the sole object of the war, and the cause of its long continuance; that they feared there was no safety for them, so long as a Prince of the royal family of France reigned over the Spanish dominions, and that those persons of their republic, who were the most attached to the English, employed this reasoning, to induce others to continue the war; that the English were more inveterate than themselves, against your Majesty; that I well knew that the greater part of them were not for dethroning your Majesty. This intimation, Sire, has given me some anxiety, for having omitted what related to its purport in the account which I gave to your Majesty of the siege of Mons, in my letter of the 5th ultimo, in the passage respecting the conversation which I had with my Lord Marlborough, because I thought they were only words spoken at random, and which might have given unnecessary pain to your Majesty. For this reason, I briefly observed in general terms, that I had replied to my Lord in a manner suitable to your Majesty's interests. But, Sire, this object having become, as it appears to me, from the above intimation, of such great importance, and [illegible] this

entire independence is much more likely to lead to peace than force of arms, I have thought I could no longer conceal it from your Majesty, but that I am obliged in duty and in conscience, in so momentous an affair, to tell your Majesty that having replied to my Lord Marlborough, respecting the union, that Spain was already entirely separated from France, as manifested by the departure of M. Amelot, and all the French, who had been in employ there; he observed that they were informed of it, but that the Princess des Ursins remained; that she was entirely devoted to France, and had complete sway over the mind of your Majesty; and that, consequently, there could be no safety, for that French policy would always govern so long as she was there. I answered him, Sire, by raillery, saying, it is astonishing, my Lord, that a woman should give you umbrage, when the government is in the hands of the Spaniards. Women have had at all periods, and will continue to have, in almost every court, a share in the distribution of the favours of princes. He assented to it, but observed, that they should feel no alarm if she was a Spaniard, but that she was a Frenchwoman. I wrote to this effect, Sire, to the Princess des Ursins, three or four posts ago, which I reiterate to her by this, with every circumstance, except my having received the letter from the Hague, because mine was written before its arrival.

ANOTHER PASSAGE FROM A LETTER TO HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY, FROM COUNT DE BERGHEIST, DATED DECEMBER 30th, 1709.

. . . . . THE Princess des Ursins having called upon me by a letter of the 16th instant, to be more explicit with her, as to what concerns the interests of your Majesty, I beg your Majesty's permission to refer to my answer to her by this post, desiring her to read it to your Majesty; and it appears to me, Sire, to be still more essential, from a communication I yesterday saw from Holland, and which may be apparent, &c.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS, FROM COUNT DE BERGHEIST, DATED DECEMBER 16th, 1709.

I BEG you to comprehend perfectly well, that they are very intent at London, and the Hague, upon the separation and independence of France being real and sincere; that this independence is more effectual to obtain peace than the force of arms, although it should be supported by that means, for too much attention cannot be paid to this object, nor too many efforts made to secure it. As they entertain a great distrust on the subject, the least adverse step might revive their animosity against the King. They declare to me that they entertain none against the Spaniards; that they wish to deliver them from this dependance

oppression and to consolidate the monarchy; and you may depend upon them being well informed of everything that is passing at the court of Madrid, &c.

ANOTHER LETTER TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS, FROM COUNT DE BERGHEIST, DATED DECEMBER 30th, 1709.

I RECEIVED, Madam, the letter which you did me the honour of writing to me the 16th instant, in which you do me that of asking, whether I have done myself the honour of writing to your Excellency respecting your departure from Spain, and you request me to speak explicitly, and that I shall give the King to understand that this is absolutely necessary. On which account I shall have the honour of observing with a perfect frankness, which you have been fully enabled to comprehend, as also his Majesty, from what I had the honour of writing to him the 16th instant, and to your Excellency from Senlis, having communicated to your Majesty, the information I had upon that subject, in the evening of the 15th instant, by way of Namur; I thought it also my duty to render an account on that occasion of my conversation with my Lord Marlborough, which I had only touched upon in general terms in my account of the siege of Mons. I enclose to your Excellency a copy of the said information, which a confidential person brought to my first secretary at Mons, by

whom he is known: from this you will clearly see how much your removal has become essentially necessary for the stability of the King upon his throne, and the obtaining of peace; how urgent it is that you put it into execution as soon as possible, in order that I may avail myself of it before the opening of the campaign, and that the place which your Excellency shall choose for your residence, shall be at such a distance from Spain, as that it shall not appear a temporary asylum, from whence you may return after the peace. It is difficult to persuade them, in four days, of the separation and independence of France, after the conduct which has been observed up to the present time; and there cannot be a doubt of the maritime powers continuing the war, I may say eternally, for the sake of commerce, so long as they cannot be made to understand that this independence is real and sincere, because commerce is the sole foundation of their power, and the French had cut it up in such a manner as to monopolize it themselves, to the exclusion even of the Spaniards. My Lord Marlborough also observed to me, in the same conversation, to conceal nothing from you, that the departure of M. Amelot, and other Frenchmen, did not in the least abate his fears; that all these persons had no other influence than what your Excellency had given them; that it was easy to recall them after peace, or put others in their

places, as long as your Excellency remained there; and several other matters which, I think it useless to mention, all concerning your devotedness to the court of France. But I think, Madam, that if you decide [illegible] g this sacrifice, it is equally importa[illegible] it as promptly as possible, in order t[illegible] et have an opportunity of deriving some [illegible] e from it, before the opening of the [illegible] because they cannot fail to feel the [illegible] ense which they are obliged to be at in [illegible] ng the war, and which will induce them to lend an ear to the advantageous offers, which the King has ordered to be made, as soon as they can be persuaded of safety by a consistent conduct. I have been persuaded since December of last year, that in the state to which things had arrived, the King could maintain himself upon the throne only by a separate peace, because France had, for the second time, offered the whole of Spain to obtain peace, and that his Majesty would sooner obtain this separate peace, by the complete independence of France, and a reconciliation with the two maritime powers, than by the force of arms. I was fortunate enough to have my opinion adopted by his Christian Majesty and his council, who thought it indeed equally impossible; but I have, in obedience to the King's commands, followed this plan, without departing

to hope, that the enemy may have placed some confidence in it, but this same conduct should be strictly observed at Madrid, in spite of every observation, complaint, or letter, from hence. The Christian King will approve of what his Majesty shall do to obtain this object: and it appears to me, Madam, that a favourable issue will be the result, if measures are shaped according to the above plan. If your Excellency decides upon quitting Madrid, I beg you to inform me of it as soon as possible, in order that I may endeavour to turn it to account, by insinuations to my Lord at the Hague, because the moments are precious in the beginning of the year. I only write briefly to the King, referring him to this letter, which I write to your Excellency; and although I have already had the honour of mentioning the greater part of these things to his Majesty, they are of such importance for his interests, that I beg of you to read the whole of my letter to him. I could presume to answer to your Excellency, for his Christian Majesty highly approving the measure, which he thinks so essential for the interests of the King, his grandson, and even his own. His Majesty spoke to me of it, in the last audience he gave me, in which, I did not conceal from him the conversation with my Lord Marlborough. His Majesty had already been of this opinion so far back as the month of July, and

he wished even then to write to the King about it, had I not dissuaded him, because I did not at that time regard it as so necessary; I think even then to have intimated something of the kind to his Majesty, and to your Excellency, but have never been quite sure of it: you will, however, see by my letters, not presuming to speak more explicitly, without being compelled to it.

EXTRACT FROM ANOTHER LETTER TO THE PRINCESS DES URSINS FROM COUNT DE BERGHEIST, DATED JANUARY 6TH, 1710.

I thought it right to communicate to the very Christian King, the letter which I wrote to his Majesty respecting the intimations I received from Holland, which relates to the letter you wrote to me the 16th of October, and the answer I had the honour of addressing to you. His Majesty immediately recollected what he had said to me upon that subject, in July last, approved of all I had written, and thought your departure essentially necessary for the interests of the King and of France. His Majesty begins to think, as well as the minister, that they will not obtain a peace, except it be through Spain.

LETTER CLXXXV.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, December 30th, 1709.

I know not the cause, Madam, but the post from France did not arrive last week; for which reason I shall only do myself the honour of imparting to you the little news there is at this court. The arrival of M. d'Iberville furnishes a subject of much conversation for these people, who are very curious to know the object of his journey; he has had the honour of an audience of three hours with their Catholic Majesties. I was during this time in the King's anti-chamber, where I perceived that all the moments were counted, and that the conference appeared very long. The King of Spain had ordered it to be intimated to this envoy, that before he gave him audience, he wished to see the Duke de Medina Cœli, the minister of foreign affairs. He said that he could not do it, his orders being strictly only to communicate the object of his mission to the King and Queen. His Majesty ordered him to be told that he was very desirous of giving him this satisfaction, through complaisance to the King, his grandfather, but that he would derive no advantage from it, because as soon as

finished with him, he should impart all that had passed to his ministers, to whom he had given his entire confidence, as he was bound to do, chiefly because he saw himself abandoned by the King, his grandfather. This morning I showed M. d'Iberville the Prince of Asturias, who was not in so good a humour as I could have wished, because he is about to cut his last double tooth; however, it appeared to me that he looked charming, and in good health: the Queen is also very well, and her tumours continue to diminish. This is all I can have the honour of communicating today, except my wishes that the winter were as fine at Versailles as it is at Madrid, as in that case you would not be incommoded by the frost. I could wish that you experienced no inconvenience, and that your mind enjoyed the greatest possible degree of tranquillity, but I think there is nobody without troubles in any situation of life. Whatever may become of me, it will depend upon you, Madam, to solace my sufferings: you have only to love me, as much as I am devoted to you, which will be very difficult.

P.S. I have just received your letter of the 22nd inst., but as it contains nothing which requires an immediate answer, and it is near post time, I beg your permission to postpone a reply till Monday next.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, October 25th, 1711.

After nine days march, Madam, I have arrived at Madrid, where I could wish to have been sooner, to hasten the repairs that are making in this palace, in order to render the apartments commodious for the King and Queen, which would have been done before now had I been present. They are not yet sufficiently aired to be habitable; on which account they have decided to stop at Aranjuez, since this is the season of the year for enjoying the fine walks there. What grieves me most at this delay is, the extreme anxiety of the people to see them again; they are very thankful to me, for having preceded them and forwarding every where by my presence the labours of the workmen. Several grandees and others took the trouble of coming to meet me as far as Guadalaxara. All the city would have visited me, but I dispensed with these civilities, not to lose a moment, except, however, those of Count de Bergheist, whom the King and Queen had done me the honour of commanding me to confer with upon many things. I was very glad to see this minister recovered from the

attacks of a violent fever, which did not prevent him from labouring to restore order in the finances, and regular payment to the armies of Catalonia and Estremadura. He hopes to accomplish his object, and I have no reason to repent having always desired, since the loss of Flanders, that he should come to serve the King, his master, who stood in need of his ability and zeal. He will pay a visit to him to-morrow, to have a conference with their Majesties, respecting what the Duke de Vendome should do to preserve the army, being convinced, it appears to me, with great reason, that too cautious a conduct cannot be observed, in the delicate circumstances in which we are placed, the principal object being peace; without, however, neglecting to make new efforts to continue the war, in case of a failure, at which I should be very much afflicted. I will not penetrate into the motives, which you say cannot be discussed in a letter, and which you hope we never shall discuss, which are, moreover, stronger than those that strike every body, since I confine my curiosity to what pleases you, and my devotedness to you is but an effect of the great confidence I place in the kindnesses with which you honour me, and of a heart affectionately attached to you; which if sufficient to give you as favourable an idea of me, as you assure me you have, I do not refuse your praise; but if they proceed from other causes, you would make me

ashamed or too vain. Quarrel with me as much as you please, if you have the least inclination for it, I shall know how to defend myself; it is not your anger I dread, but your indifference. I agree with you, that nothing is greater for the King, than to have placed his grandson upon the throne, and to maintain him there in spite of all Europe, which was the cause of my mortal displeasure, when I reflected that he was ready to descend from it, if God and his firmness had not sustained him. I remember perfectly well the description which you gave of his most Christian Majesty; it cannot be more flattering, and at the same time more correct, and it is certain, that with his lofty demeanour, engaging hauteur, kindness, and politeness, he is superior to other men, of whatever age they may be. As to the Dauphiness, I think that her lovely figure can only be equalled by her rare and estimable qualities. I recognise in this Princess traits of cheerfulness and vivacity, observable in the conversation of the Queen, her sister, who leaves nothing to desire, when one has the happiness of hearing her, but that she will not cease speaking. It is not only in France that the Princess Anne is supposed to be well disposed towards us, and the King her brother. How delighted should we be, Madam, if this virtuous Queen, and the King her son, returned in triumph to London! But what will become of the Princess of England, a

has ever more anxiously desired than myself. The enemy has latterly made an attempt to take Tortosa, by surprise, but the Chevalier de Glimes, a good Flemish officer, repulsed them so vigorously, that they lost more than a thousand men in killed and wounded: their object was to burn our magazines which are upon the sea shore, but they retired after being defeated in their first project. The apartments of this palace are nearly ready, at which the French envoy appeared to me so well satisfied, that we agreed to get a plan of them drawn, for the inspection of his Majesty, who might have the goodness to let me know what he thought of them. I do not know, Madam, whether it is because I have rather two good an opinion of my own works, that I think it so fine, but it appears to me, there are few European Princes who can be more nobly or conveniently lodged than their Majesties. There are, however, many things wanting as to magnificence, which must be postponed to happier times. The King and Queen enjoy the fine weather at Aranjuez, where I deprive myself of the honour of paying my court to them, in order that they may the sooner make their entry into Madrid, which will be I think towards the beginning of next week at latest.

If I am right, Madam, in reckoning Marshal de Villeroi as the best of my friends, you are not less so in believing him the firmest of yours. I know no one who renders you more justice than he

does, nor praises you for those things which are the best calculated to ensure you respect and friendship.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 9th, 1711.

THERE is no probability, as you pertinently observe, Madam, that M. de Staremberg, being so confined as he is in his operations, should ever expel Philip V., and interrupt the negociations of a peace so anxiously desired. Recollect, if you please, that people who will always judge ominously, said that the death of the Emperor would avail nothing in obtaining it, when we now experience the reverse, which should teach us we are bad judges of the future: you would not have thought it possible to have loved Queen Anne so affectionately, nor to have known the tenderness of the Duke of Savoy's conscience, which excites him to repair the injury he has done to those whom he has ruined. His Royal Highness has not done less to the two Princesses his daughters, by exerting every effort to dethrone the Queen, and to render the Dauphiness unhappy; but it is to be hoped that this Prince will not be

one of the last to unite with them in becoming a friend of France and Spain. The Queen's tumours are not adherent. The Marquis de Bonac may have the honour of assuring the King, that she is in perfect health at Aranjuez, and very cheerful. The King and her have greatly enjoyed the fine weather there. The whole of this palace will be ready for the reception of their Majesties whenever they please, not having lost a moment in getting the repairs completed. I have received the packet which you did me the honour of sending me, and which I shall be sure to answer by next post. I confess I begin to be at a loss, why the King will no longer have Marshal de Villeroi near him, or why the Marshal does not do the needful to recover the honour of his Majesty's gracious notice. I doubt much, if the King supports the jesuits, whether Cardinal de Noailles will succeed in expelling them. It must be confessed, that very extraordinary things are passing at your court. The situation of Count de Toulouse is very afflicting, and must give great pain to the Duchess of Orleans, who, it appears to me, has been very much attached to him from infancy, and by friendship, and who deserves to have only sources of satisfaction. The King of Spain has appointed his plenipotentiaries: the first is the Duke d'Ossuna, one of the greatest and richest Lords of

which you will not be surprised, is Count de Bergheist; and the last, is the Marquis de Monteleon. These nominations appear to be approved by the public, which is not a little. I shall leave you in repose, Madam, until the general war is finished, in order to make individual war upon you. It will diminish nothing of the respectful affection which I have for you.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 22d, 1711.

I THINK I have not suffered less, Madam, from the impossibility of writing to you, than from the malady which has prevented me, and from which I now begin to recover. I was attacked thirteen days ago with a fever and bilious affection, which tormented me in more than one respect, and prevented me from taking any nourishment. You may conceive that this was quite enough to weaken a constitution still stronger than mine. I sent for a Flemish physician, those of their Majesties not being here, and the remedy which he gave me entirely banished the fever, leaving no inconvenience behind. He has done as much for Count de Bergheist, the Prince de Belmont,

of my nephews, and several others. The name of this physician is Verof; and the Marquis de Bedmar says, that having been given up by all those at Brussels, the latter extricated him from danger in twenty-four hours. M. de Bergheist brought him to Madrid, and says that a man of such tried skill cannot be too well paid. You will easily conceive, Madam, that I was very much hurt at not being able to receive the King, Queen, and their charming Prince in their apartments; but my good will was greater than my strength, and their Majesties condescended to come and console me in my chamber, and did me the honour of assuring me that they were satisfied with my superintendence. I was extremely so at the state of the Queen's pregnancy, her face never having looked fairer nor more blooming. She had always wished to become pregnant only in a time of peace; God has granted her wishes, at least, if appearances are not deceitful, as I hope, and the English persist in their resolutions; for as to the Dutch, if they continue to act malevolently, there will be a way of bringing them to their senses, and perhaps it will be happy for France. I hope that the King will have been satisfied with the plenipotentiaries appointed by his Catholic Majesty. I am very glad that the operation which the Count de Toulouse has undergone has been successful, I conceive the uneasiness it must have given the King and the

whole court, this Prince being as much esteemed and loved as he deserves. I figure to myself the Dauphiness shining in the midst of the crowd by which she is surrounded, and who admire her from morn till night. What a felicity for every one to possess so accomplished a Princess, and who knows so well how to attract respect and esteem! I hear nothing but the most amiable things of her, which affords great pleasure to the Queen her sister. I am highly gratified to see their mutual affection visibly increase. Joy on both sides does not contribute a little to cherish it, as one is in a good humour when everything goes on well. We shall find ourselves in this happy state, and we shall relish it much more after having encountered so many storms.

You will at last turn my head with Marshal de Villeroi: what do you mean by saying that I should believe, that he draws back as advances are made towards him? There must be some misunderstanding, which you do not explain to me, and which puts me quite out of all patience; but it is not the first time in my life that things have happened, which have heated my blood. I am, Madam, entirely devoted to your wishes, provided you did not attack my friends when they are not in the wrong.

LETTER CXC.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, November 30th, 1711.

THEIR Majesties, Madam, had no letters from the French court last post, and I did not receive those which you weekly do me the honour of writing to me. M. de Bonac suspects that it is because there was an intention of soon despatching a courier. By letters from private individuals, we learn that the Dutch continue to be very much irritated, and Queen Anne to adhere firmly to her resolution, which affords great pleasure. You will likewise experience it, to learn that the Queen continues to go on very well in her pregnancy, and that his Majesty and our dear Prince are in good health. Their Majesties since their arrival at Madrid, have done nothing but give audiences to all the councils, and a thousand other people, whom they have received. For my part, Madam, my malady, from which I am gradually recovering, has prevented me from having had the honour of attending, as regularly as I could have wished at these levees, because the air is so cold and piercing, and this is against a convalescent. The Duke de Vendome has informed his Majesty of the capture of Cordova,

and that he hoped in a short time to carry the castle, which will much cramp the Prince de Staremberg; there is nothing else at this court worthy your curiosity. I take the liberty of addressing you a letter for Marshal de Villeroi, in answer to that which you forwarded to me from him; I constantly wish for yours, being more sensible than I can express of the assurances you are pleased to give me of your continued friendship.

LETTER CXCI.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 20th, 1714.

By a misunderstanding, Madam, you are not yet informed of the object of M. de Chalais' journey; and it is only this day, that the King of Spain informs him by a courier, which he despatches to Paris, that he is to request an audience of the King, in order to have the honour of opening his commission. His Majesty, as modest as your young ladies of Saint Cyr, would most anxiously wish to conceal from every one, as long as possible, what his conscience alone obliges him to do, and that there should only be

the King and yourself, the depositories of his secret. However, should his Christian Majesty think proper that Cardinal del Giudice and M. de Torcy should know it, his Majesty begs of you to let my nephew impart it to them, in order that they may not think it is through mistrust this affair is concealed from them, and that my nephew may avoid incurring displeasure, for having made a mystery to them of a subject on which obedience required his silence.

LETTER CXCII.

TO THE SAME.

Madrid, June 20th, 1714.

I CANNOT habituate myself, Madam, to believe, as you wish me, that you are not mistress of your own conduct; and I should be more disposed to think, that loving as you do a retired life, you employ this pretext not to see people, when it pleases you; nevertheless, you are too sincere to say the contrary of what you think, especially to a friend, over whom you can always exercise your influence; for which reason I conclude, that it is very unfortunate for my nephew not to have had the honour of paying his court to you, and to me for being deprived of the satisfaction I should have enjoyed at his conversing with you upon several topics, which it is impossible to discuss in

a letter. You may, Madam, without running any risk, reproach, scold, and love me, since I am not infallible: I will endure all you say without murmuring, and shall not love you the less for it. Permit me, if you please, to take the same liberty. Our correspondence would become insipid, were it not mixed with everything which enters the head, and I should fear disgusting you with mine, were I nothing but your mere flatterer.

Marshal de Berwick is then at last going to make the conquest of Barcelona, which would have been reduced a long time since, had you desired it. The King of Spain has written to this general very obligingly at Perpignan; we shall be extremely glad to return him our thanks at Madrid, after his conquest, which is not the only important service he will have rendered to this crown. He may tell me all that he pleases, I shall willingly listen to him, and will answer him as well as I can. You are too well informed, Madam, of great affairs, to be ignorant of what has passed relative to my sovereignty; therefore it would be useless to repeat to you all that has been done, and especially when the King of Spain was assured that the moment he had waived the guarantee of the Dutch, I should be put in possession of this sovereignty; but unfortunately for me, his Catholic Majesty had no sooner done so, than no more was said about it, and the treaty of Radstadt has been insensibly brought forward, in order to

refer me to that of Baden, in which, to tell you the truth, my friends do not think I ought to place great hopes. The distance does infinite harm on many accounts, and I think with you in this respect.

Thank God you do justice to Madame de Caylus, and are impressed with her merits: she has nothing fastidious, and is besides as lovely in her mind as in her person. I look upon it as a happiness for you, that she has the honour of being your niece, and that you risk nothing in unbosoming yourself to her, as she cannot be wanting in her duty to you, without being deficient in a proper regard for herself. I expect that the Prince de Chalais will be delighted with her, and I shall praise him for his good taste. The Marquis de Caylus has the recommendation of having been born in my good graces, and I can have the honour of assuring you that I will render him all the good offices in my power. I shall be very glad for a son of Madame de Caylus to come to Madrid, and figure to myself that it will be my own, especially if he will look upon me as his second mother. I entreat you to get rid of that little fever, which weakens you; it troubles me, but is not dangerous. An account has been sent here of the sedition, which has manifested itself at Lyons, and that Marshal de Villeroi would go to quell it. It is a pity that he is detained by the gout, as his presence

could not fail of producing good effects wherever he appeared.

Sometimes a change of air does good; that of Rambouillet, being different from the air of Marly and Versailles, may cure you of your indisposition. I visited this palace formerly, and remember having a dispute there with the late Duke de Montausier, which will not astonish you. These disputes were accompanied, as you know, with the politeness of the hotel de Rambouillet, where snuff was not yet known, nor other fashions which have been introduced since, and which would not then have been tolerated.

The Abbé de Mornay is not old enough to have benefited from the politeness of that, but he has followed other examples, which show that he has been at a good school. He has had the honour of seeing their Majesties, and the three Princes, with whom he appeared to me to be well satisfied; I am very much so with him, but leave it to himself to inform you whether he is so with me. He told me that he was anxious to depart for Lisbon, for the baptism of the Prince, whose godfather the King is to be, because the Queen of Portugal will be uneasy till it is over. They have a bad custom in that country, of not protecting the heads and faces of children from the sun. I predicted to the ambassador, that he would not be amused at this court; I have relations with it,

which induce me to form this opinion: ours is still at the Pardo, where all are quite well, and where you have a respectful servant, entirely devoted to you.

LETTER CXCIII.

TO CARDINAL AQUAVIVA.

(*By express.*)

June 20th, 1714.

The King of Spain, Sir, from all the favourable things you have written of the Princess de Parma, which has been confirmed to him from several unsuspected quarters, has decided to give this Princess the preference of a place upon the throne; and as his Majesty wishes that his marriage may shortly take place, he has commanded me, Sir, to have the honour of writing to your Eminence, to hold yourself in readiness to go and treat about the marriage at Parma, as soon as his Majesty shall despatch a second courier to you; and to do which, he only waits for the consent of the King, his grandfather, to whom he has sent on purpose. You will receive, Sir, by this second courier all your instructions, clearly made out, in order to leave no doubt. Therefore, his Majesty desires you, as I have just intimated to your

Excellency, to make secret preparations for your departure for Parma, not wishing to lose a moment in the conclusion of this affair.

I am, Sir, &c.

P.S. All the royal family are in perfect health.

LETTER CXCIV.

TO THE PRINCE DE CHALAIS.

June 20th, 1714.

I RECEIVED your two letters of the 4th instant, after the courier which has been despatched to Cardinal del Giudice had set out; and I have seen, with chagrin, that my letter, which you have received by M. Duvivier, was not sufficiently clear, and that from the doubt it created, you have not thought it right to demand your audience. I, therefore, send you a courier with all expedition, to tell you from his Majesty, that you are to demand it of the King, and Madame de Maintenon, to announce to the latter, the necessity in which his Majesty finds himself of marrying again, for the reasons which I have stated to you from him. You will then have the honour of telling them, that his Majesty gives the preference to the Princess de Parma, having very good accounts of her intellect, person and health, and that he

entreats his approbation, not wishing, from the respect and affection he entertains for the King, his grandfather, to take any step in this affair, without knowing whether it will be agreeable to him.

If his Christian Majesty does not absolutely approve, for unforeseen reasons, of this match, the King of Spain commands you to propose the grand-daughter of the Queen of Poland, who is at Rome, and whose mother is of the Palatine house, and niece of the Empress first dowager, of the Queen of Spain, and the Electress of Bavaria.

I send you an open letter for Madame de Maintenon, by which you will perceive that through modesty, and not distrust, his Majesty could wish nobody to know of the marriage, which he is about to negociate; and you will shape your conduct, my dear nephew, from the answer she may give you, by the contents of this letter. You will despatch to us, after your audience, the same courier, to inform us of the result; his Majesty not wishing to lose a moment in sending for the Princess of Parma, who, as I have just observed to you, appears to him much preferable to any other Princess, both for himself and the interest of his subjects.

I have nothing more to add, my dear nephew, than the assurances of the real friendship I have for you.

LETTER CXCV.

TO THE PRINCESS OF PIOMBINO.

June 23d, 1714.

SINCE I have had the honour of knowing you, my dear niece, I have conceived so much esteem for you, that I have always desired to give you proofs of it; and it is with much satisfaction that I do myself the honour to-day of writing to you, to congratulate you on the choice which the King has made of your Excellency, to honour you with the commission of accompanying into Spain the Princess whom the King has decided to place upon his throne. I have had the honour of assuring him, that he could find no person of your merit, rank, and zeal, who is so capable as your Excellency of acquitting herself of this important charge, and I have no fear of exaggerating too much in advancing this truth. You will receive, my dear niece, your instructions, which the King has ordered me to send to Cardinal Aquaviva, who is to give them to you, recommending to you both, the greatest secrecy, being desirous that his marriage shall only transpire at the very last moment. I anticipate all the satisfaction I shall enjoy at your landing at Valencia or Alicant; and I should consider it happy for me, if I could render you any service at this

court; entreating you to believe, that you have no relation or friend, who is more affectionately than I am, your Excellency's, the very humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CXCVI.

TO CARDINAL GUALTERIO.

June 23rd, 1714.

It is with the utmost satisfaction, Sir, after the misfortune of losing the Queen, at which event my sorrow becomes daily more poignant, that I see by the letter, with which the King honours your Eminence, the particular esteem he has for your merit, talents, and probity, since he confides to you the negociation of his second marriage, which his Majesty explains to you, and upon which it is consequently unnecessary I should say more. I shall, therefore, content myself, with assuring your Excellency, that his Majesty, and the three Princes whom he has done me the honour of confiding to my care, enjoy, thanks be to God, as good health as we could wish; and sincerely wishing you the same, I continue to be, the truest friend, which your Excellency can ever have, and your very humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CXCVII.

TO THE MARQUIS DE TORCY.

June 24th, 1714.

I OFFER you a thousand thanks, Sir, for your information respecting M. de Schlieben, for it is good to know people who wish to have to do with courts, which adventurers rarely frequent but for the sake of obtaining some favour. This person has just been requesting one, and the Queen dowager seems very much interested in his behalf, having strongly recommended him to the King of Spain, and having done me the honour of writing to me a thousand kind things of him. Apropos, of this Queen, Sir: she thinks the Duke de Saint Pierre no longer entertains the idea of returning to her service, and she has desired the King, her nephew, to form a court for her, having now no person of distinction near her person, which neither suits this Princess, nor his Majesty, who has done me the honour of commanding me to acquaint you with it, because you wished that your brother-in-law, who was then at Savona, might occupy the places of major domo and grand almoner, which were vacant at the Queen dowager's, and which you knew, as well as he, that he would not have thought of appointing successors to, if the

Duke de Saint Pierre had wished to continue his very humble services to the Queen, his aunt. I entreat you, therefore, to do me the honour, of giving me an answer, which I may show to his Majesty.

The Abbé de Mornay has arrived at the Pardo, where the King was very glad to see and converse with him. This ambassador assured him of the King being in good health, which is the greatest consolation that we can enjoy after so many misfortunes. I wish, Sir, that you may have nothing but cause for satisfaction, and it will be a real one to me, if you are fully persuaded, which I entreat you to be, of the perfect esteem I entertain for you.

LETTER CXCVIII.

TO CARDINAL DEL GIUDICE.

June 25th, 1714.

I HAD the honour, Sir, of giving to the King the letter you enclosed in my packet; which contains nearly the same thing as what your Excellency had communicated to the Prince de Chalais, judging that he has done nothing but to execute punctually the orders of the Catholic King, who destined him for the commission, with which he is entrusted before you left this court,

and who recommended to him an inviolable secrecy, for reasons which your Eminence shall know hereafter, and which I can assure you are in no respect contrary to the esteem and confidence which the King entertains for you. Do not, therefore, think that there is any thing kept from your Excellency which arises from mistrust; and if you will do me the honour of believing me, Sir, me, who am your truest servant, and firmest friend, do not mind certain appearances, which hurt your delicacy, from the infinite zeal you entertain for the King, your master, and which are nevertheless not in the least prejudicial to you. You are not ignorant, Sir, any more than Cardinal de la Tremoille, that kings talk, and are silent, when they please, and that we subjects are born blindly to obey them, too happy if they deign to accept our entire submission, being deities on earth, who do not permit us to penetrate their intentions. All these observations are solely meant to show you, that you should not be uneasy, since you ought to be assured of the favourable regards of his Catholic Majesty. I shall add, if you please, that you should not, moreover, do injustice to my nephew, in being displeased with his apparent reserve, at which he is perhaps more vexed than yourself, and knowing how much I honour you, he would take an extreme pleasure in showing you that he is of the same opinion. You will

very much oblige me, when you see the Duchess d'Elbœf, and the Princess d'Epinay, to give them a thousand thanks for drinking my health at M. Voisin's: I have a long time ago flattered myself that I was not quit forgotten by him, nor by Marshal de Tessé and the Duke de Frêmes. I am always more glad to know the high reputation you will acquire in France, from the interest I feel in what concerns your Eminence, of whom I am the most humble and obedient servant.

P.S. The King and Princes are in good health.

LETTER CXCIX.

TO THE PRINCE DE CHELAMARRE.

June 25th, 1714.

Not doubting, Sir, but the Baron de Capres has long since received all his instructions and commands from the King, conformable to what you have agreed upon together, in the meetings which you have held at the house of M. d'Aubigny, I shall say nothing more upon the subject. His Majesty would have sent forthwith the Marquis de Monteleon to London, where you all think his presence necessary, to induce that court powerfully to second the engagements which it has made in what concerns me, if he had judged it proper to leave

Utrecht without concluding the Peace of Holland and Portugal, which his Majesty does not wish to experience the least delay; for by adopting the former measure, he wishes to give a proof of his deference to his grandfather, and the latter, because it suits him to put an end to the war in Spain.

I cannot thank you and the Cardinal sufficiently for all your attentions, at which I am not however surprised, depending so firmly as I do upon the honour of your Excellency's friendship and his; this has obliged me, Sir, to answer him with the freedom of a faithful servant and friend, on the subject of his last letter, which I had the honour to deliver to the King. My knowledge of the heart and mind of this Prince, has induced me to speak to the Cardinal with the confidence that I do, intending by that means to make him acquainted with the disposition of the King, in order that he may conform to it without the least difficulty or uneasiness. Be pleased to procure a sight of his letter, and my answer; and I entreat both of you, Sir, to depend entirely upon my pure intentions, being more than any one entirely devoted to you, and your very humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CC.

TO MADAME DE MAINTENON.

July 2nd, 1714.

As the peace with Holland, Madam, appears to me now concluded, it is unnecessary to say more about it.

It did not require much penetration to perceive in you a little coolness towards me, but it would require much more than I possess to divine the cause of this misfortune, having nothing to reproach myself with my obedience to and zeal for the King, never having diminished in the midst of so many extraordinary events, which the singularity of my fate has made me experience.

I do not know, Madam, why Marshal de Villeroi should have disapproved of your confiding to me your temptations, since what did you risk in doing so; it could, on the contrary, only produce a very good effect, since I know how to keep secrets, and we could have mutually explained ourselves, upon points which cause misunderstandings that make me the sufferer. I think, Madam, that the presence of this Marshal in his government, where he is revered and beloved, cannot but be attended with great benefit. He will find the Archbishop's see of Lyons vacant, and will they not

have the courage to place in it the Abbé de Villeroi, in whose family it has been for so long a time, and which has so well served the King. You who will interfere with nothing, will you not take upon yourself on this occasion to remind the King of this? Had I the honour of being near you, I would take the liberty of reproaching you for your timidity, when the interests of your servants and friends are principally in question. You have one here, who is come to take leave of his Catholic Majesty, on his way to Portugal. We have had an interview of several hours together, and I could wish he may have been as much pleased with my conversation as I have been with his. He is aware of being about to pass rather a melancholy life at Lisbon, and I think he will not be deceived. You will easily conceive that our conversation was principally about you. It is certain that one cannot become reconciled to all the losses which have been experienced in the royal family, and it is to be lamented that the Duchess de Berri's pregnancy has not produced a Prince, but having sustained an injury in the birth of a Princess, the grief will be less on that account. All those who had bought offices under the late Duke de Berri are to be pitied, if the King does not notice them, as there is reason to hope from his generosity.

I should be very sorry if Marshal de Berwick's fever prevented him from setting out immediately, as they write from the army that it will only

depend upon him, on his arrival, to open the trenches, everything being ready.

The Abbé de Mornay having asked me very civilly whether in the short stay he should make at Madrid, he ought to pay any visits, I answered, that it would be proper to pay some to the grandees, who had seen him, and other influential characters, and also to ask the husbands whether they would approve of his visiting their wives, of whom there were but few. The Marchioness de Bedmar is one, and I mentioned to him a widow,* whom, if he had not distinguished, it would have much displeased you, since you honour her with your good opinion; and for which I do not think I shall incur your disapprobation.

If you are attached to the King of Spain, I assure you he deserves it, from his esteem and real friendship for you. He often does me the honour of evincing this, and he would not do so if he did not feel it.

God preserve the King and the Dauphin in the good health which you say they enjoy; and that he may restore yours for many years, is what I fervently wish.

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* Probably the Duchess of Alba.

LETTER CCI.

TO THE MARQUIS DE TORCY.

July 2nd, 1714.

It is a long time, Sir, since I have received any letters of yours with which I have been more gratified, than your last of the 18th ultimo, because it strikes me that I discover in it the same feelings of confidence with which you formerly honoured me, whatever cause I may have imagined on several occasions to fear lest you were no longer the friend that you had been. I have not ceased to esteem you, and to wish for the return of your friendship; therefore, you have no difficulty in persuading me that you still entertain it, for we easily flatter ourselves with what is agreeable to us; and I assure you that I am very much affected with what you write to me on this account, the more so, as renewing a more intimate union between us, I am persuaded that it can only be more beneficial to the service of the two Kings. Every reason, Sir, should induce us to this line of conduct; and I had the honour of telling his Catholic Majesty the other day, when he was conversing with me upon the present and future, that I knew nobody so capable as yourself of usefully serving the King, his grandfather, and him, and consequently France

and Spain, since you have all the requisite intelligence, prudence, and discretion. His Catholic Majesty was of my opinion, and the conversation finished by his doing me the honour of saying to me, that I should afford him great pleasure in imparting to you the good opinion which he entertains of you. I agree that every thing which is not dictated by the King, will be nothing more than a chimera, and that it is only from his will that realities can proceed; if any misfortune happened, and of which one cannot think without trembling, you have the honour to be near him, and as you love his glory, the royal family, justice and your country, we have only to rely upon the care of a minister, assiduous to discharge his duties, and those of an honest man. You ought to be satisfied with the extent of my confidence, and will not be less so with the sincerity with which you will always find me entirely yours, if, as I entreat, you place all your confidence in me, of which you will never have cause to repent.

The Abbé de Mornay came to take his leave yesterday, and sets out to-morrow. The King of Spain has done him the honour of granting him a long audience, and spoke to him on several topics, upon which he was very glad to receive information. This ambassador and his Majesty seem to be mutually satisfied with each other, of which he will not probably fail to inform you,

attachment to you, upon which it would be useless to say more.

Cardinal del Giudice appears to us delighted with the King's kindness, his personal attentions, and the civilities he receives from all the court. Every body sends an account of them here, which does him great honour. You see, Sir, that his Catholic Majesty knows how to make good appointments, and one may flatter oneself that his Eminence, will greatly contribute to the good understanding between the grandfather and the grandson, which is so desirable.

I have read the answer of the States General to the Marquis de Chateauneuf, concerning my sovereignty. This affair, Sir, in your hands, ought to have a favourable issue, supported so forcibly, as you write to me, by the honour of the King's protection; and this obligation will be as great as the signal kindness of his Catholic Majesty in my behalf.

LETTER CCII.

TO THE MARQUIS DE TORCY.

August 4th, 1714.

The resolution which his Catholic Majesty has formed to continue to lead a pious life, will induce him to take another Queen, which may, perhaps,

cause an alteration in the occurrences of this court. I am convinced that nothing was so perfect as her whom we have lost, nor so proper to be the mistress of a heart only to be swayed by affection. I could wish that the Princess who will be next entitled to it may be successful; but, Sir, I know not whether two strong passions can so rapidly succeed each other; the wound is yet very deep, and as reason has a greater share in this second engagement than inclination, I fear lest the new Queen should feel at first that she replaces one who constituted the sole delight and consolation of the King. He does me the honour of thinking that I can contribute to inspire her with the means of pleasing him; and his Majesty could wish me, if my health permitted it, to give her the meeting when she enters Spain with her attendants; but I know not as yet, Sir, what I shall do upon this point, not wishing to leave our three Princes for a long time together. I think with you that it will be difficult to prevent the marriage from obtaining publicity. Cardinal Aquaviva, who has the negociation of it, had the prudence to ascertain whether the report which was in circulation respecting the Prince of Piedmont was well founded, before his departure. He found that the Duke of Parma was at full liberty; and we knew, besides, that this Prince was under no engagement, and that he would consider it a great honour to form such an

alliance. The Cardinal, Sir, has assured the King, his master, that as soon as we shall despatch to him the courier, with the approbation of his Christian Majesty, he should immediately commence his journey; so that, according to our calculation, he must be now at Plasencia, where the court of Parma is held. I am not surprised that that of Tuscany has no desire for the house of Savoy to increase its power in Italy, therefore Count de Gergy has given you correct information. It is thought at Madrid that Count d'Albert, and myself, are in negociation for the daughter of the Elector; and it is added that I am actuated by self-interest, wishing for a recompense to obtain my sovereignty. The pain you feel at the little hope you entertain of the Baron de Capres succeeding at Basle, although he is furnished with good reasons, and full powers, shows your good faith, and goodness of heart, for which I return you a thousand very humble thanks.

The Count and Countess de Ribera came here three days ago, when I took them to the Prince of Asturias, who wished to dance, and did this lady the honour of dancing a minuet with her; the King also did her that of coming on purpose into the Prince's chamber, where he showed her many civilities. This Portuguese lady has the finest possible shape, and is in other respects very amiable. Count de Ribera protested to me, that there were fifty women at Lisbon who might be

called beautiful or agreeable; from which circumstance, Sir, one should entertain a better opinion than that which you have of Lisbon, and be induced to think that the Abbé de Mornay will not be so weary o[illegible]eved, although the angels will not [illegible]hunting, as they do Cardinal del [illegible]ppears to me more and more delight[illegible] court. This letter is too long, and I [illegible] yours.

LETTER CCIII.

TO CARDINAL AQUAVIVA.

August 8th, 1714.

As I suppose your Eminence now at Parma, and the King dispatches a courier there, I embrace this favourable opportunity to do myself the honour of writing to you, and of congratulating you, beforehand, on having so well answered to the confidence with which his Majesty honoured you in so important an affair for him, and the consolation of his subjects. His Majesty cannot be more highly satisfied than he is with your Eminence; and he hopes you will conclude as promptly as he wishes the affair for which he has sent you to the court of Parma. We have the Abbé Albe-

satisfied, having found himself in very critical circumstances, in which the former has shown great intelligence and prudence; which has induced his Majesty to command me to inform you of it, in order that you may intimate to the Duke of Parma, that this person will be more agreeable to him than any one else, since he could have no other object than to maintain a perfect good understanding between the King of Spain and the Prince his master, so necessary for the happiness of the new Queen, which they will not fail to attempt disturbing at Madrid. For this reason too many precautions cannot be taken. You have witnessed the reciprocal affection, which has always subsisted between our admirable Queen and our great and pious King, who had no secrets for each other. It is necessary that this same maxim, from which so much good resulted, should be adopted in a second engagement; and the means of accomplishing it is to establish a rule in the beginning, which may conduce to it; and for this object, a princess should give herself wholly up to the husband she wishes to please, without making petty confidants of domestics, who usually think they display their merit by retailing stories calculated to poison the mind of a young princess, and more especially those whom she brings along with her. The late Queen did me the honour of owning to me, more than once, that it was very well arranged to send back from

Perpignan all the male and female Piedmontese who had accompanied her from Turin. We impatiently expect the courier, which you will dispatch after your arrival at Parma; and we are also very impatient to hear of the capture of Barcelona, which must soon take place, and the account of which will be brought us by Don Alexander Lanty. The Duke d'Astry is quite well, and very punctual in embracing the honour, which the King does him, of admitting him to his private parties of pleasure: he plays at ombre, and so often wins of his Majesty that he is rebuked for it, which, however, does not correct him. He is a nephew, Sir, who deserves all your affection, as I do the continuation of your Eminence's friendship, and you cannot refuse mine, no more than the sincerity with which I am your very humble and obedient servant.

LETTER CCIV.

TO CARDINAL AQUAVIVA.

August 15th, 1714.

We have learnt, Sir, by your courier, of your safe arrival at Parma, and of the match proposed by the King being accepted; his Majesty impatiently expected the news. The secrecy, as you

do me the honour of writing to me, and as I had foreseen from the beginning, was as necessary as the vigilance with which you have repaired to that court. His Majesty cannot be more satisfied than he is, with the zeal and conduct of your Eminence; and without any exaggeration of praise, I cannot help having the honour of telling you, that it was impossible to do better than you have done. You will receive, Sir, an account of every thing which took place in the marriage of the late Queen, as a guide to you in your proceedings. The King is willing for the Marquis de Maidalchini to have the honour of serving as major domo to the new Queen, as Count Scotti did to the former one, since it is the wish of the Princess of Piombino and your Eminence. On landing in Spain, he will return by the same vessels, with this Princess, if she does not come to Madrid; and if she comes here, he will accompany her, to return with her, since his society will be agreeable to her on the journey. It appears to me that the Princess of Piombino might go as far as Parma, and accompany the Queen alone, in her Majesty's carriage, placing herself on the front seat, as doing the duty of camarera-mayor, in order to avoid the inconveniences which might occur, if her Majesty were accompanied by the Duchesses of Parma and Modena, from the space they would occupy in the carriage; for your Eminence knows that the Queen of Sicily, the

Queen mother, and grandmother of the late Queen were treated as of the blood royal, which makes a difference. The camarera-mayor always sits on the front seat, as I have just mentioned to you; and if these two Princesses were in the carriage, the Duchess of Modena must necessarily sit beside her; and I am at a loss how this could be arranged. It would then be better for the Duchesses of Parma and Modena, after taking leave of the Queen in the palace, to make her a final adieu at the place you shall fix upon, for them to proceed and to descend from their carriages, with the Princess of Piombino, in order to exchange their mutual embraces; all of which meets the King's approbation. Nevertheless, Sir, his Majesty leaves it to your good sense to act as you think proper. I am very glad that the Duke and Duchess of Parma will have the satisfaction of seeing the Princess their daughter leave their states a great Queen; and I can conceive that they will have reason to be satisfied, from the instances which have occurred in Italy on similar occasions.

The portrait is satisfactory, and I hope the original will be still more pleasing. The King writes to the Princess of Parma what appears to me a very gallant letter, and which you will not be sorry to present to her. I am very much obliged to you, Sir, for having assured this Princess of my desire to have the honour of pleasing

her, by evincing my respect for her Majesty. I beg you, also, to acquaint the Duke and Duchess of Parma that I will endeavour to merit the honour of their esteem and confidence. I could very much wish that Cardinal de Gualterio might be appointed legate, as he would fill this office very well; and the King has highly approved of your having acquainted him, that he wished him to have been charged with your commission, had you been unable to undertake it yourself.

The Princess of Piombino gives a new proof of her attachment to his Catholic Majesty, by her gladly consenting to accompany the Queen to Spain in the delicate state of her health, and leaving her daughters alone at Rome during her absence. I shall be delighted to be of any service to her. I think that this Princess, if she comes to Madrid, will be inclined to embrace the opportunity of coming by the squadron which convoys the Queen; and as she would not be at her ease with respect to accommodation in her Majesty's vessel, she might come in another. If the Princess Pio has the honour of seeing her before the embarkation, it will be requisite to give her the *almohada*, because you know that the Princess Pio is a grandee of Spain. I think I have nothing more to add, except the assurance of the sincerity with which I honour your Eminence.

P.S. Since writing my letter, the Abbé Albè-*roni has come to* the Pardo, to beg I would

represent to the King the great desire which the Duke of Parma has to have the honour of dining with the Queen, which has obliged the King to mention over again a different ceremonial to that which I have indicated to you, an acccount of which he has commanded D. Joseph de Grimaldi to communicate to you, and I think the Abbé Alberoni is doing the same to his sovereign. The whole of these ceremonials are pretty well beset with difficulties, and it will require all your skill to satisfy everybody, without prejudice to the King's Majesty; nevertheless, I have so high an idea of your knowledge, that I hope you will accomplish everything. As to our friend the Princess of Piombino, her part of the ceremonial is arranged, since happen what may, she will only have to wait for the Queen, where the court of Parma quits her, and then to do her duty of conductress, to be seated upon an *almohada*, or stool without a back, to eat at her Majesty's table, to sleep in her chamber, to put on her linen, and wait upon her in every thing which is honourable, leaving the rest to the Queen's domestics; all which I did from Nice to Spain, and I take as much care of what concerns her, as I should have done for myself.

LETTER CCV.

TO THE QUEEN.

August 30th, 1714.

WERE it possible to be absent for a long time from the Princess, whom the King has done me the honour to confide to my care, my anxiety to pay my court to your Majesty would have induced me to go farther than a journey of four days to receive you, and I should have made light of the greatest distance to have the pleasure and honour of being present at your Majesty's disembarkation, and to be the first to congratulate you on the felicity you will enjoy, of receiving the crown from one of the greatest and most amiable monarchs on earth, whose only object will be to render your Majesty happy. I should be too much so, Madam, if when near the person of so accomplished a Princess as fame reports you to be, I could flatter myself she would kindly vouchsafe to accept my attachment. I presume, with all humility, to entreat your Majesty to believe, that I will spare no pains to deserve this honour, and that you will find nobody who is more submissively and respectfully than I am, your Majesty's very humble, obedient and devoted servant.

LETTER CCVI.

TO THE MARQUIS DE TORCY.

December 8th, 1714.

I THINK, Sir, whatever desire you may have for Europe to be at peace, you would derive consolation should the English make war upon each other, and that your instructions to the Marquis d'Alegre will not be to attempt to diminish the misunderstanding, which you say daily increases between the two parties. Letters, however, have been received from persons at London, who are connected with the ministers, and which state, that it will be the proposals which M. Stanhope has been sent to make at Vienna, that are to decide his Britannic Majesty on the measures he will adopt, and that nothing can be certain until his return.

I am very sorry that Marshal de Berwick has not recovered his health; he appeared to me a little dejected when he passed through Madrid, and the long journey which he has since made will have been of no service to him. I am very glad, Sir, that he was pleased with the confidence with which I spoke to him; it was a proof of my esteem which I have always entertained, and which cannot, I think, be better placed. Never doubt, Sir, of

that which I have for you, and consider me as the truest of your very humble servants.

LETTER CCVII.

TO MADAME DE MAINTENON.

December 8th, 1714.

I THINK with you, Madam, that Cardinal de la Tremoille has need of being put into possession of the affairs which take M. Amelot to Rome, it being very difficult to know which may be in the right of two such opposite parties, and who may each, to make their cause appear better, pass over certain circumstances, which sometimes change the aspect of the affair in question. It is to be wished that the Pope and the King may discover some expedients to arrange this matter amicably, and that afterwards the minds of the disputants may be perfectly reconciled in France. His Majesty and you have a long time suffered from this intestine war, which is scarcely less dangerous than that which we had to support against our foreign enemies. It is asserted that the Whigs and Tories are so irritated against each other in England, that they may probably leave us at peace; which, however, one cannot be sure of, until the return of M. de Stanhope, who, it is

surmised, is gone to Vienna, to oblige the Archduke to enter into a new league against our two Kings, for which reason it is prudent to prepare ourselves against the worst, to be neither deceived nor taken by surprise. His Catholic Majesty is, therefore, making every possible preparation, and M. Orry, who is astonishingly indefatigable, seconds most energetically the efforts of the King of Spain, who superintends everything himself, and is surprised to find in the head of one man, all he discovers in that of M. Orry. There are only persons who seem particularly interested in discrediting him, or those who do not see what he does, that say he is only fit for a subaltern; as to myself, who have no other object but the public good, and who passionately love the glory of his Catholic Majesty, I say boldly, that the monarchy would be lost, if this minister happened to be unfaithful. If by chance he changed his maxims, I should also alter my opinion of him. When it was wished to send him back to France, and I was at Burgos, I did not blow hot and cold; and you may remember that you did me the honour of then telling me, that the only fault with which I was reproached was, that of protecting him too much. Did things proceed better in his absence? And how much were we not reproached, where you are, with everything which was done here! What a number of Spanish Lords failed in their fidelity to

their master! How many are there who followed the Archduke in 1710! It is certain beyond a doubt, that these gentlemen, who had always been favoured, had brought upon us the war: why then should they vaunt so much of their fidelity? If it was equal to that of the Castilian people, and of a certain number of nobles, who have really done their duty, I should not have a word to say; and I am so naturally disposed in favour of this nation, that I never fail highly extolling those amongst the grandees, who have shown their attachment to his Catholic Majesty who has employed them in great offices, or in his councils. After this explanation, permit me to have the honour of earnestly entreating you to procure information of the people, who you say observe, that it would be necessary to employ Spaniards in preference to others, and who are those that are the most proper to introduce into the royal household, military employments, those of justice and embassies; for I protest to you that nothing is more desirable than to find them. Nothing is more easy than to say, it is necessary to employ the Spaniards, but the difficulty is to meet with them. I promise you, Madam, that if you will have the goodness to be so complaisant for me, I will communicate to you very sincerely the good or bad qualities of the persons that may be mentioned to you, and whom we have but too many *opportunities* of knowing. The office

Grand Equerry to the King and Queen is vacant, as also that which was filled by the Duke of Alba. In God's name, Madam, obtain instructions on these points, in order that we may know whether it is possible to satisfy them. It is very deplorable to do nothing without incurring blame, when one has such good intentions.

I will believe, Madam, since you assure me of it, that there is no wish to get rid of me; but I cannot help confiding to you that I much desire to get rid of all my embarrassments, and to lead a less agitated life. My friend Marshal de Villeroi leads one for which he is well calculated, and which may be very serviceable to the good of the state; I depend firmly upon the honour of his friendship; but could I not learn what are the causes which excite his good heart to shew on so many occasions his sensibility for me, and what is its object? You will afford me great pleasure by informing me, since he will not make a boast of it: the courtiers, who appear neither amiable nor estimable, ought to mould themselves upon his model, which would not however be very easy for them to effect. I have left off judging of the Queen, from there being so many different reports about her, and shall wait until I have the honour of being in her presence.

LETTER CCVIII.

TO THE SAME.

December 14th, 1714.

I AM not surprised, Madam, that you have done me the honour of informing me, that Mademoiselle Fleury is sister to the King of Spain; but I am so at your being ignorant of the fact, that the late Monseigneur regarded her as his daughter. There are some things which would appear incredible if related by any other person but yourself. It is a proof of great kindness on the part of the Princess de Conti to show so much anxiety to see Mademoiselle Fleury married, and it will be another of the King's generosity to give her a sufficient dowry, so as to enable her to make a match which may console her for not being recognised for what she really is. I have heard that she has a good figure and is very sensible.

I have told his Catholic Majesty of the story which has been invented about him, and it was very necessary that the King of Spain should have heard of the affair through you: people are too fond of fabrications which have no foundation in truth. A letter has been received this post at Madrid, stating that M. Amelot had received a magnificent ring from the Sicilian Ambassador,

who was ordered from the King his master to present it; that the King having heard of it, was very angry at his having accepted this present without his permission, and that he had ordered him to return it to the ambassador; but that the latter refused to take it back, because he had already communicated the fact of its delivery to his master. Are not these fine stories to circulate in foreign countries? You have no difficulty in persuading me that M. Amelot is really my friend, as well as Marshal de Villeroi; the conduct of both fully compensate me for the few upon whom I ought to calculate; and yet, Madam, I could boast, if so inclined, to have merited by my good offices a considerable number. I have met many ingratitudes everywhere, without being able to desist from making new ones; I would not ask them to be grateful, it would be too great an enjoyment at once to do good and know that people were grateful for it. I shall be satisfied if they abstain from doing me harm; this appears to me as much as we ought to expect.

It is to be hoped that the swoonings which the Duke of Orleans has had, will not produce any disagreeable consequences; you tranquillise me as to the Dauphin, in saying that M. Fagon finds him so well: the most trifling accidents that happen to such a precious prince create alarm.

caused to be fitted up for the King of Spain; his Majesty often looks at it with pleasure and tenderness.

I am delighted to hear you have adopted a regimen with which you are so well satisfied: if you drank a little Alicant wine after dinner, you would be still more so. I have some which is excellent quite at your service; it has, however, only the name, as the idea of its coming from Alicant is erroneous, this wine is made at Rota in Andalusia. The Queen has written to tell the King that she will not bring any of her Italian attendants farther than Pampeluna; if this is not the case, it would be very unpleasant, as his Catholic Majesty will certainly send her confessor and physician back, being desirous that she should in this respect follow the example of the late Queen; this Princess cannot do better than to imitate her in all things. I have frequently had the honour of stating to you that I wished to await her arrival at Jadraca, in order to judge of those qualities which are so variously represented. I was put into a most violent passion this morning, against a vile flatterer, who wanted to make me believe that the marks of the small-pox adds grace to her features; can adulation be carried farther than this, and is it not enough to make one's blood boil?

I defer my departure till the arrival of a courier who will be despatched from Pampeluna, so as *not to make* a needless stay at Jadraca. If I can,

Madam, I will inform you from that place, or from Guadalaxara, of all that relates to the Queen. Since you do me the honour of confiding in my observations. I will speak to you with great candour, this has become a habit in my intercourse with you, which I shall not change.

THE END.

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